



Nebraska Wind Energy and Wildlife News

August 5, 2013

Researchers from the University of Nebraska – Lincoln, Boys Town National Research Hospital, and the University of Nebraska at Omaha spent the spring and summer studying prairie grouse at the Ainsworth Wind Energy Facility in north-central Nebraska. The article below provides a great summary of the project. More information about the project will be coming this fall.

[The Grouse Girls Head Home After Studying the Prairie Chickens on the Wind Energy Facility.](#)

Since March they have been exploring the area around the Ainsworth Wind Energy Facility, documenting the lives of many prairie chickens to see what effects, if any, the Ainsworth Wind Energy Facility has on them.

(http://www.ainsworthnews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=6501&catid=16&Itemid=2)

Around Nebraska...

[Deal will give big boost to LES wind energy resources.](#) The Lincoln Electric System has signed a contract to buy power from a future wind farm in south-central Oklahoma, a move the utility says will save customers \$160 million over 20 years. (http://journalstar.com/news/local/deal-will-give-big-boost-to-les-wind-energy-resources/article_43093d96-bb4e-5112-9133-b7e091f14162.html).

[Oklahoma wind farms to provide power to Arkansas, Nebraska.](#) Two new wind farms planned in south-central Oklahoma will provide electricity to utilities in Arkansas and Nebraska, developers said. (<http://newsok.com/article/3864823>).

[Lincoln Electric System's energy purchase from Oklahoma criticized](http://www.omaha.com/article/20130730/MONEY/130739988/1707). A decision by the Lincoln Electric System to purchase wind energy from Oklahoma is being criticized by the Nebraska Farmers Union. Earlier this month, Lincoln Electric System agreed to purchase 100 megawatts of wind energy. LES officials touted cost savings for its customers. But Farmers Union President John Hansen said the public utility also has a responsibility to boost economic development in Nebraska. (<http://www.omaha.com/article/20130730/MONEY/130739988/1707>).

[Nebraska Supreme Court reverses lower decision on tax credits for wind farm](http://www.omaha.com/article/20130802/NEWS/130809758/1707). The Nebraska Supreme Court reversed a lower court ruling Friday that had struck down property tax credits for a Knox County wind farm. The high court determined that a 2010 state law intended to encourage wind farm development in Nebraska did not violate the constitution. (<http://www.omaha.com/article/20130802/NEWS/130809758/1707>).

Around the Nation & World...

Wind and Wildlife

[To avoid killing birds with wind turbines, researchers track flight patterns off Maine coast](http://bangordailynews.com/2013/07/31/outdoors/biologists-tracking-maine-seabirds-in-advance-of-offshore-power/). Lack of information about seabird flight patterns has become a concern to biologists as plans for offshore wind energy development come closer to fruition. (<http://bangordailynews.com/2013/07/31/outdoors/biologists-tracking-maine-seabirds-in-advance-of-offshore-power/>).

[Focus on the Environmental Impact of Wind Energy](http://iopscience.iop.org/1748-9326/focus/Environmental%20impact%20of%20wind%20energy). Environmental Research Letters cross-disciplinary review. (<http://iopscience.iop.org/1748-9326/focus/Environmental%20impact%20of%20wind%20energy>).

[Clearer Rules On Mitigation Needed To Boost Renewable Energy Projects](http://www.ecosystemmarketplace.com/pages/dynamic/article.page.php?page_id=9879§ion=news_articles&eod=1). The Obama administration's pledge to ramp up renewable energy can be accomplished only if it is in coordination with the mitigation efforts for habitat and species impacts. But right now mitigation rules are a patchwork of good, bad, and just plain confusing. Here is a rundown on the complex state of compensatory mitigation and renewable development. (http://www.ecosystemmarketplace.com/pages/dynamic/article.page.php?page_id=9879§ion=news_articles&eod=1).

[Wind Farm Downscale on Environmental Consultation Outcomes](http://www.renewableenergyworld.com/rea/news/article/2013/08/planned-scottish-wind-farm-to-reduce-in-size?cmpid=rss). A proposed onshore wind farm development in Sutherland, Scotland has been substantially reduced in size following an environmental impact consultation. (<http://www.renewableenergyworld.com/rea/news/article/2013/08/planned-scottish-wind-farm-to-reduce-in-size?cmpid=rss>).

[Another California Wind Energy Project Canceled](http://www.kcet.org/news/rewire/wind/another-desert-wind-project-dropped.html). Yet another proposed wind project in the Mojave Desert has been dropped. The 84-megawatt proposed Granite Wind LLC Wind Energy Project between Barstow and Lucerne Valley has been withdrawn by its developer, and the project's likely effect on the local eagle population is a big reason. (<http://www.kcet.org/news/rewire/wind/another-desert-wind-project-dropped.html>).

[Another Endangered Species Kill Permit Issued to Make Way for Wind Energy](http://www.kcet.org/news/rewire/wind/another-endangered-species-kill-permit-for-wind-turbines.html). The 125-megawatt **[Buckeye Wind Project](#)**, west of Columbus in central Ohio, received an Incidental Take Permit from the Fish and Wildlife Service last week allowing the facility's wind turbines to injure or kill an average of about five bats per year. (<http://www.kcet.org/news/rewire/wind/another-endangered-species-kill-permit-for-wind-turbines.html>).

[Hypocrisy Over Bald Eagle Protection From Wind Turbines Begins At The Federal Level](http://www.nawindpower.com/e107_plugins/content/content.php?content.11846). With such a robust recovery, what threats are jeopardizing the population of these birds today? And are wind turbines likely to pose a significant threat? (http://www.nawindpower.com/e107_plugins/content/content.php?content.11846).

Wildlife

[Scientists identify key fungal species that help explain mysteries of white nose syndrome](http://esciencenews.com/articles/2013/07/25/scientists.identify.key.fungal.species.help.explain.mysteries.white.nose.syndrome). U.S. Forest Service researchers have identified what may be a key to unraveling some of the mysteries of White Nose Syndrome: the closest known non-disease causing relatives of the fungus that causes WNS. (<http://esciencenews.com/articles/2013/07/25/scientists.identify.key.fungal.species.help.explain.mysteries.white.nose.syndrome>).

Check out the complete article, **[Phylogenetic evaluation of Geomyces and allies reveals no close relatives of Pseudogymnoascus destructans, comb. nov., in bat hibernacula of eastern North America](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1878614613001025)**, by Andrew M. Minnis published in Fungal Biology at: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1878614613001025>

[Conservation and Management of Declining Bat Populations in Eastern Forests](http://www.forestrywebinars.net/webinars/Conservation%20and%20Management%20of%20Declining%20Bat%20Populations%20in%20Eastern%20Forests?goback=%2Egde_1791214_member_260784124). Bats in the eastern U.S. are experiencing significant declines due to disease, wind-turbines, and loss and fragmentation of their forested habitats related to urban development. Climate change may also impact their populations and distribution. U.S. Forest Service Research Ecologist Susan C. Loeb, will discuss the plight of different bat species as well as the results of recent studies on the effects of forest management and other disturbances on their populations and how forest management can be used to create habitat. (http://www.forestrywebinars.net/webinars/Conservation%20and%20Management%20of%20Declining%20Bat%20Populations%20in%20Eastern%20Forests?goback=%2Egde_1791214_member_260784124).

[Prairie Chicken Tracked on 1,165-mile Journey in Missouri and Iowa](http://www.infozine.com/news/stories/op/storiesView/sid/56669/). A female prairie chicken wearing a GPS tracking collar surprised and puzzled biologists this summer by traveling 1,165 miles in big circles in southern Iowa and northern Missouri. (<http://www.infozine.com/news/stories/op/storiesView/sid/56669/>).

Wind

[Wind Map – Art](http://hint.fm/wind/). An invisible, ancient source of energy surrounds us—energy that powered the first explorations of the world, and that may be a key to the future. This map shows you the delicate tracery of wind flowing over the US. (<http://hint.fm/wind/>).

Transmission

Newly available wind power often has no place to go. The windswept prairies of the Midwest are undergoing an energy transformation the electric grid can't handle. (http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2013/08/05/198428/newly-available-wind-power-often.html#.Uf_aJJ96-1).

Why Does Hot Weather Cause Power Outages? Transmission lines have to carry power from these relatively few power injection points to all these different destinations. Transmission lines, however, are just wires, and they have limited capacity. In fact, their capacity actually goes down when it's hot. (<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2013/07/130719103146.htm>).

Job Opportunity

Quantitative Ecologist - focused on wind energy and wildlife. The United States Geological Survey is recruiting a post-doctoral scientist in quantitative ecology for a project focused on developing and testing methods to assess the impacts of wind energy on wildlife at regional to national scales. (http://ornithologyexchange.org/jobs/index.html/_/postdoctoral-positions/quantitative-ecologist-focused-on-wind-energy-and-wildlife-r2490).

Upcoming Events

The Wildlife Society Annual Conference will be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin October 5-10, 2013. For more information: <http://wildlifesociety.org/>.

Sixth Annual Wind Conference will be held in Lincoln, NE on November 13-15, 2013. This year's theme is "Harvesting Nebraska's Potential." For more information and to register: <http://nebraskawindconference.com/>.

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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