



Nebraska Wind Energy and Wildlife News

November 22, 2013

Around Nebraska...

[SNR researchers discover unusual prairie chicken movement](http://newsroom.unl.edu/announce/snr/2865/15616). Prairie chickens typically stay within five miles of their lek of capture during the breeding, nesting and brood-rearing seasons. In the fall, however, researchers were alerted to something unusual. "We recently discovered that a hunter recovered a prairie chicken over 30 miles from its lek of capture," Olney said. Olney was part of a team of researchers from the School of Natural Resources who banded 70 prairie chickens in the Sandhills last spring. They were trapped using non-baited, walk-in funnel traps near the lek grounds, which are areas on the land where males gather in the spring to dance and attract females for breeding. (<http://newsroom.unl.edu/announce/snr/2865/15616>).

[Building of large wind farms could provide major property tax relief, advocates say](http://www.omaha.com/article/20131112/NEWS/131119750/1707). The answer to high property taxes in Nebraska, at least in some rural areas, might be blowing in the wind. (<http://www.omaha.com/article/20131112/NEWS/131119750/1707>).

[Bluestem Energy Solutions and Baird Holm Report: Impact of Wind Energy on Property Taxes in Nebraska](http://www.bairdholm.com/publications/entry/bluestem-energy-solutions-and-baird-holm-report-impact-of-wind-energy-on-property-taxes-in-nebraska.html). Bluestem Energy Solutions and Baird Holm have teamed up to produce a report that provides a comprehensive demonstration that wind energy development provides significant property tax benefits in Nebraska. (<http://www.bairdholm.com/publications/entry/bluestem-energy-solutions-and-baird-holm-report-impact-of-wind-energy-on-property-taxes-in-nebraska.html>).

A copy of the report can be found here:

http://www.bairdholm.com/images/Property_Tax_Relief_through_Wind_Energy_in_Nebraska.rev.pdf.

[Energy Department Invests Over \\$7 Million to Deploy Tribal Clean Energy Projects](#). As part of the Obama Administration's commitment to strengthening partnerships with Tribal nations and building stronger, more resilient communities that are better prepared for a changing climate, the Energy Department today announced nine tribal clean energy projects to receive more than \$7 million. Highlighted during the 2013 White House Tribal Nations Conference, these awards will help American Indian and Alaska Native tribes deploy clean energy projects – saving these communities money, enhancing their energy security and creating new job and business opportunities. The Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska was selected for a solar project. (<http://energy.gov/articles/energy-department-invests-over-7-million-deploy-tribal-clean-energy-projects>).

[Hassebrook, Dubas push wind energy development](#). Democratic gubernatorial candidates Annette Dubas and Chuck Hassebrook pledged their support Friday for aggressive development of wind energy in Nebraska. (http://journalstar.com/news/state-and-regional/statehouse/hassebrook-dubas-push-wind-energy-development/article_52bdf143-ea66-5d74-ae6e-ba7328567f23.html).

[Nebraska Utility Selling Wind-Generated RECs To Medical Tech Company](#). Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) has entered an agreement to sell wind-generated renewable energy credits (RECs) to Becton, Dickinson and Co. (BD), a medical technology company, for 20 years. (http://www.nawindpower.com/e107_plugins/content/content.php?content.12279).

[Nebraska to nearly triple wind energy capacity by 2015](#). A series of new projects will nearly triple Nebraska's wind energy capacity by the end of 2015. Nebraska currently has the capacity to generate 459 megawatts from wind power. John Hansen, the co-chair of the sixth annual Nebraska Wind Conference, told an audience on Wednesday that the state will add 750 megawatts over the next two years. (http://trib.com/business/energy/nebraska-to-nearly-triple-wind-energy-capacity-by/article_4423a921-5c18-56d9-9e7d-2f9c17dc5834.html).

[Wind for Schools program ends, but learning continues](#). The DOE stopped funding the Wind for Schools program Oct. 1, and operation and maintenance of the more than 135 wind turbines that have been installed in 11 states will fall to schools, which plan to use the turbines as part of their curricula. (http://journalstar.com/news/state-and-regional/nebraska/wind-for-schools-program-ends-but-learning-continues/article_0ae0a44b-68e1-504e-a2c9-94824b884e06.html).

[Wind Energy Lead Technician - Broken Bow at GE Power & Water \(Nebraska\)](#). Advanced computer skills utilizing word processing, spreadsheet processing, e-mail programs, facility control and management systems, and computer diagnostic. (<http://www.environmentguru.com/pages/elements/element.aspx?id=1405335>).

Around the Nation & World...

Wind and Wildlife

[CLEVELAND: Study claims wildlife is safe with wind turbines](#). A new report by a wildlife expert claims that the Lake Erie wind turbine project called "Icebreaker" will have no significant biological impact on birds and bats near its operations. (<http://www.wkyc.com/story/news/local/2013/11/18/cleveland-study-claims-wildlife-safe-with-wind-turbines/3633111/>).

[High Bat Mortality from Wind Turbines](#). A new estimate of bat deaths caused by wind turbines concludes that more than 600,000 of the mammals likely died this way in 2012 in the contiguous United States. The estimate, published in an article in BioScience, used sophisticated statistical techniques to infer the probable number of bat deaths at wind energy facilities from the number of dead bats found at 21 locations, correcting for the installed power capacity of the facilities. (<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2013/11/131108091314.htm>).

[Bats Killed in Large Numbers at United States Wind Energy Facilities](#), by Mark A. Hayes, will be published in Bioscience in December 2013. You can check out a pre-publication version at: <http://www.aibs.org/bioscience-press-releases/resources/Hayes.pdf>.

[Broken Bats: Wind Turbines and the Damage Done](#). Last year, IEEE Spectrum profiled an ultrasonic alert for wind farm operators designed to [let them know when bats are nearing their turbines](#). The potentially bat-saving technology can't be ready soon enough according to this week's issue of the journal Bioscience. (<http://spectrum.ieee.org/energywise/green-tech/wind/us-wind-power-killing-bats-by-the-hundreds-of-thousands->).

[State approves wind farm despite bird threats](#). Threats to birds didn't stop state regulators from approving an energy-producing wind farm with towering, whirling blades planned for [Palm Beach County](#) sugar cane fields. (http://www.sun-sentinel.com/news/palm-beach/fl-wind-farm-concern-20131121_0,1851149.story).

[Wind farm tries to minimize bird deaths](#). An operations center in California can shut down wind turbines 1,200 miles away in Montana in fewer than 30 seconds when the flight patterns of golden eagles and other raptors indicate a potential collision in the making. The quick response is possible because of tracking radar, "detect and deter" cameras and human spotters called "bio-monitors" deployed at Rim Rock Wind Facility in Montana's Glacier and Toole counties. (http://dnews.com/news_ap/article_42f06690-2255-548f-a4ec-625c2099b13e.html).

[Obama admin. not prosecuting wind farms for bird deaths](#). The Obama administration is giving wind power producers a pass by not going after them for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of federally protected birds and bats. But the feds have gone after fossil fuel and other companies that have killed these animals. (<http://dailycaller.com/2013/11/18/obama-admin-not-prosecuting-wind-farms-for-bird-deaths/>).

[Bird collisions with wind turbines reviewed](#). As wind energy continues to emerge as a green energy alternative to fossil fuels, bird mortality from collisions with the turbines also is on the rise. Previous research suggests anywhere between 10,000 and nearly 600,000 fatal bird collisions occur in the lower 48 of the United States each year. (<http://www.ardmoreite.com/article/20131120/NEWS/131129994/1001/NEWS>).

[Bird Deaths by Wind Turbines Studied by Oklahoma State Researchers](#). Oklahoma State University researchers have joined others nationally in looking into the number of bird deaths attributable to wind turbines. (<http://okenergytoday.com/?p=8126>).

[Environmental impacts: 'Landscape-scale' mitigation is a breakthrough](#). An important development in the conservation world has gone largely unnoticed. It shouldn't have. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell issued a directive that embraced a "landscape-scale" approach to mitigating the environmental impacts of major highway, water, energy and other infrastructure development projects. This is a big idea that deserves notice, and the support of developers and the environmental community alike. (http://m.mercurynews.com/sjm/db_101050/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=Q3XTvD8S).

Wildlife

[So Far, No Silver Bullet to Stop Lethal Bat Fungus](#). Since its appearance in the U.S. seven years ago, white-nose syndrome has decimated bat populations across eastern North America. Scientists say they've determined the culprit—a soil-dwelling fungus called *Pseudogymnoascus destructans*—and now they're investigating novel ways to stop it, including antifungal bacteria. (<http://www.sciencefriday.com/segment/11/08/2013/so-far-no-silver-bullet-to-stop-lethal-bat-fungus.html>).

[NWF Releases Report on Climate Change Impacts to Big Game Wildlife](#). The National Wildlife Federation (NWF) recently released their "[Nowhere to Run: Big Game Wildlife in a Warming World](#)" report

as part of their Wildlife in a Warming World series. The report is an easy-to-read 25 pages, which explains how each North American big game species and their habitats may be affected by climate change. (<http://news.wildlife.org/featured/nwf-releases-report-on-climate-change-impacts-to-big-game-wildlife/>).

Wind

[Land-Based and Offshore Wind Resource Map @ 100 Meters](#). The Energy Department, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, and AWS Truepower provide the wind resource map below that shows land-based with offshore resources. This map is the first to provide wind developers and policy makers with a seamless representation of the wind resources estimated at a 100-m height for all 50 states—the 48 contiguous states, Alaska, and Hawaii—as well as offshore resources up to 50 nautical miles from shore. (http://www1.eere.energy.gov/wind/resource_assessment_characterization.html).

[Wind Energy vs. Coal – Infographic](#). [New Leaf Energy](#) developed this image detailing the difference between the wind power and coal power. Specifically, this infographic discusses both generation, transmission, and distribution of energy. (<http://my.socialtoaster.com/splash/25brc/>).

Tools

[Land-Based Wind Energy Guidelines Tier 4 Post-Construction Studies and Reporting](#). The 3rd broadcast in the FWS Wind Energy Training series and accompanying materials are now available online. The live broadcast originally aired on October 30. Christy Johnson-Hughes of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is joined by a special presenter on fatality estimation from the USGS and leads a roundtable discussion on post-construction studies and reporting. Manuela Huso (USGS), begins the broadcast with an enlightening presentation on fatality estimators. In the second hour, Christy is joined by Jerry Roppe with Iberdrola Renewables, returning guest Jeff Everett with the USFWS, and Special Agent in Charge Jill Birchell, with the USFWS Office of Law Enforcement in the Pacific Southwest Region. The roundtable discussion covers many common questions, and some less common, that are often raised regarding Tier 4 studies and reporting. (http://www.fws.gov/windenergy/wind_training/wind_training.html).

Utility Scale Renewable Energy Development – Project sitting & Conflict Resolution Webinar. December 18, 2013 (Wednesday) 1:00 PM – Eastern Time. Registration: There is no registration and no fee for attending this webinar. To join the webinar go [to http://connect.msu.edu/ncrcrd](http://connect.msu.edu/ncrcrd), “enter as a guest” is by default already chosen. Type your name into the text box provided, and click on “Enter Room”. You are now in the meeting room for the webinar.

Upcoming Events

AWEA Wind Project Siting Seminar will be held in New Orleans, LA January 29-30, 2014. For more information: <http://www.awea.org/events/Event.aspx?EventID=21659&navItemNumber=5647>.

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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