

Nebraska Wind Energy and Wildlife News

August 25, 2014

Featured...

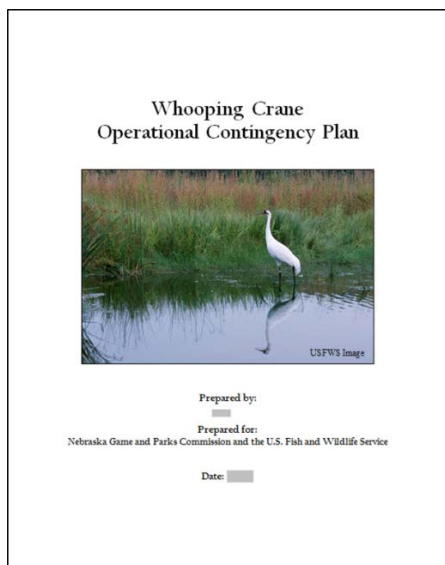
Multi-State Bat Blitz

This year, the Southeastern Bat Diversity Network is planning a Multi-State Bat Blitz and is inviting all states to mist-net 1-2 nights between September 4-10, 2014. If you are interested in learning more about the Nebraska event or helping organize an event in your area, contact windwildlife@unl.edu.

Information on the event can be found at:

http://sbdn.org/blitz_info.html.

Whooping Crane Operational Contingency Plan



A [Whooping Crane Operational Contingency Plan](#) "template" was developed based on previous contingency plans and input from the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (NGPC) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). An operational contingency plan outlining what steps will be taken in the unlikely event a Whooping Crane is observed near a wind energy project can help reduce the potential for Whooping Crane-wind turbine collisions.

The Whooping Crane is [state and federally listed](#) as an endangered and is found in Nebraska during spring and fall migration.

Although Whooping Cranes migrate at elevations higher than 1,000 feet, they rely on frequent stopover sites to rest and feed. It is in approach or departure to stopovers and during flights to feeding areas while at stopover locations that Whooping Cranes are more susceptible to collisions with structures, such as wind turbines.

It is highly recommended that wind energy developers and operators develop an operational contingency plan for Whooping Cranes for wind energy development projects in Nebraska. The ["template"](#) can be used to assist in plan development. Use of the "template" does not replace consultation with the NGPC and USFWS.



Around Nebraska...

[Nebraska Receives \\$500,000 from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for Conservation](http://neblandvm.outdoornebraska.gov/2014/07/nebraska-receives-500000-u-s-fish-wildlife-service-conservation/). The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission has received a \$500,000 grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for bat conservation efforts. Game and Parks was one of 14 recipients of this year's USFWS State Wildlife Grants. The grants, which were announced earlier this month, are awarded for large-scale conservation projects that cross state lines and yield measurable results to benefit imperiled species. (<http://neblandvm.outdoornebraska.gov/2014/07/nebraska-receives-500000-u-s-fish-wildlife-service-conservation/>).

[Be on the lookout for bats](http://nebraskaradionetwork.com/2014/08/25/be-on-the-lookout-for-bats/). The Nebraska Humane Society in Omaha has received hundreds of calls from concerned residents after finding bats inside their home. Vice-President of Field Operations Mark Langan says this is typical for late summer, early fall in Nebraska. He says nights are cooler and bats will try to find a warm spot and houses are an ideal spot. (<http://nebraskaradionetwork.com/2014/08/25/be-on-the-lookout-for-bats/>).

[7th Annual Nebraska Wind & Solar Conference & Exhibition: Turning Challenges into Nebraska Opportunities](http://nebraskawindandsolarconference.com/) will be on October 29th and 30th in LaVista, Nebraska. There are sponsor and exhibitor opportunities at varying price levels. If you have presentation ideas, you can submit them to: admin@nebraskawindconference.com. (<http://nebraskawindandsolarconference.com/>).

Around the Nation & World...

Wind and Wildlife

[Wind Farm Facilities in Germany Kill Noctule Bats from Near and Far](http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0103106). Migratory noctule bats were found to originate from distant populations in the Northeastern parts of Europe. The large catchment areas of German wind turbines and high vulnerability of female and juvenile noctule bats call for immediate action to reduce the negative cross-boundary effects of bat fatalities at wind turbines on local and distant populations. Further, our study highlights the importance of implementing effective mitigation measures and developing species and scale-specific conservation approaches on both national and international levels to protect source populations of bats. The efficacy of local compensatory measures appears doubtful, at least for migrant noctule bats, considering the large geographical catchment areas of German wind turbines for this species. (<http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0103106>).

[Bat deaths prompt change at wind farm](https://www.reviewjournal.com/news/water-environment/bat-deaths-prompt-change-wind-farm/). A White Pine County wind farm that sells power to NV Energy has been forced to change operations after its massive turbines killed triple the number of bats allowed under an agreement with federal regulators. (<https://www.reviewjournal.com/news/water-environment/bat-deaths-prompt-change-wind-farm/>).

[Cautious but Committed: Moving Toward Adaptive Planning and Operation Strategies for Renewable Energy's Wildlife Implications](http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs00267-014-0333-8#page-1). By Johann Köppel, Environmental Management, August 2014. Wildlife planning for renewable energy must cope with the uncertainties of potential wildlife impacts. This article attempts to highlight the benefits of more adaptive approaches as well as the possible shortcomings, such as reduced planning security for renewable energy developers. In conclusion, these studies show that adaptive planning and operation strategies can be designed to supplement and enhance the precautionary principle in wildlife planning for green energy. (<http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs00267-014-0333-8#page-1>).

[International guide lists energy development as pronghorn threat](#). Increasing energy development has been shown to affect the survival of sage grouse, but a new report shows such development also

harms pronghorn antelope. (http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/news/wildlife/article_90b7a4b0-2552-11e4-af0b-001a4bcf887a.html).

3 Ways to Keep Bats Away from Wind Turbines. Because of white nose syndrome, mounting public pressure and scrutiny from wildlife officials have become a major motivator for wind energy companies to figure out how to prevent bat deaths. Three targeted strategies are in the works. (<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/3-ways-to-keep-bats-away-from-wind-turbines/>).

How Many Birds Are Killed By Wind, Solar, Oil, And Coal? In response to growing accusations from both [conservationists](#) and [conservatives](#) that renewable energy sources like solar and wind kill too many birds, [U.S. News and World Report](#) has compiled data on which energy industries are responsible for the most bird deaths every year. (<http://thinkprogress.org/climate/2014/08/25/3475348/bird-death-comparison-chart/#>).

Agency corrects number of eagle deaths at wind farms. More than a month after the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said it had reports of 15 golden eagles killed at wind farms in the area, the agency has retracted that number and said most of the eagle deaths actually occurred elsewhere in California. (<http://www.desertsun.com/story/news/environment/2014/08/18/agency-corrects-number-eagle-deaths-wind-farms/14266669/>).

Wildlife

Is White-nose Syndrome Causing Insectivory Release and Altering Ecosystem Function in Eastern North America? By David S. Jachowski, Bat Research News, Summer 2014. In this letter, we estimate the total biomass of insects that is no longer removed as a result of the catastrophic declines in populations of bats in eastern North America. Our preliminary analysis highlights the importance of not only directing research toward declining populations of species of conservation concern, but also to considering the potential cascading, indirect, ecological effects of emerging infectious diseases, such as white-nose syndrome. (<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbXkYXZpZGphY2hvd3Nr aXxneDoxNWmM2lxZDZhMGFiYmZm>).

Disease and community structure: white-nose syndrome alters spatial and temporal niche partitioning in sympatric bat species. Emerging infectious diseases present a major perturbation with apparent direct effects such as reduced population density, extirpation and/or extinction. Comparatively less is known about the potential indirect effects of disease that likely alter community structure and larger ecosystem function. In addition to the obvious direct effects of disease on bat populations and activity levels, our results provide evidence that disease can have cascading indirect effects on community structure. Recent occurrence of WNS in North America, combined with multiple existing stressors, is resulting in dramatic shifts in temporal and spatial niche partitioning within bat communities. These changes might influence long-term population viability of some bat species as well as broader scale ecosystem structure and function. (<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/ddi.12192/abstract>).

Bats bolster brain hypothesis, maybe technology, too. Amid a neuroscience debate about how people and animals focus on distinct objects within cluttered scenes, some of the newest and best evidence comes from the way bats "see" with their ears, according to a new paper in the *Journal of Experimental Biology*. In fact, the perception process in question could improve sonar and radar technology. (<http://phys.org/news/2014-08-bolster-brain-hypothesis-technology.html>).

Wind

Environment Canada testing radar software to combat wind farm clutter. Environment Canada is preparing to roll out new radar technology in order to combat wind farm clutter, which clouds weather forecasts, misleads meteorologists and can even block radar signals.

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/technology/Environment+Canada+testing+radar+software+combat+wind+farm/10105958/story.html>).

[Energy Department Reports Highlight Strength of U.S. Wind Energy Industry](#). The U.S. continues to be a global leader in wind energy, ranking second in installed capacity in the world, according to two reports released today by the Department of Energy. Wind power is a key component of the nation's all-of-the-above strategy to reduce carbon pollution, diversify our energy economy, and bring innovative technologies on line. (<http://energy.gov/articles/energy-department-reports-highlight-strength-us-wind-energy-industry>).

[Federal agency shrinks NC's zone for offshore wind farms](#). Prospects for large-scale wind farms off North Carolina's coast got a lot smaller Monday when the U.S. Department of Interior announced it reduced the areas of the Atlantic Ocean where turbines can be built. (http://www.newsobserver.com/2014/08/11/4065590_feds-shrink-ncs-offshore-wind.html?sp=/99/104/&rh=1).

Webinars & Workshops

[EISPC Energy Zones Mapping Tool August Webinar Demonstration](#): Tuesday, **August 26, at 3pm** ET/2 pm CT/1 pm MT Use the following link to attend the webinar: http://anl.adobeconnect.com/eispc_tool_demo (Audio via the webinar or by phone: 1-877-685-5350, participant code: 853223). This one-hour demonstration will feature solar energy resource data, and utility-scale concentrating and photovoltaic solar suitability models.

[EISPC Energy Zones Mapping Tool Webinar](#) was on **July 29, 2014, at 2 p.m. CT**. This one-hour demonstration featured Wind energy resource data and Land-based and Offshore Wind suitability models. The tool has many uses that are explained during the webinar. The webinar was recorded and can be accessed at: <http://anl.adobeconnect.com/p3794bbuz3d>.

Announcements

[AWWI Releases Request for Information on Detection and Deterrence Technologies](#). AWWI is announcing a [Request for Information \(RFI\)](#) regarding available and in-development technologies intended to detect and deter birds and/or bats in the vicinity of wind turbines. The purpose of this RFI is to gather information about detection and deterrence technologies; specifically the state of research and product development around the detection and deterrence of birds and bats with the goal of reducing wind turbine collision fatalities and minimizing effects on project operation. All responses must be submitted via email to info@awwi.org by 11:59 PM on Friday, September 5th. For more detailed submission instructions, please see the RFI. (<http://awwi.org/awwi-releases-request-for-information-on-detection-and-deterrence-technologies/>).

[Proposed CRP Changes Open for Comment](#). The Farm Service Agency announced this week that it is accepting comments on a draft [Supplemental Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement](#) (SPEIS) for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). The SPEIS addresses changes to CRP mandated by the recently passed 2014 Farm Bill. (<http://news.wildlife.org/featured/proposed-crp-changes-open-for-comment/>).

[Department of Energy, Wind and Water Power Technologies Office: Wind Energy Bat and Eagle Impact Minimization Technologies and Field Testing Opportunities](#). The U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) invites public comment on its Request for Information (RFI) regarding a potential funding opportunity to advance the readiness of bat

and eagle impact minimization technologies through investments in technology development and field testing.

In its RFI, EERE requests comments, information, and recommendations on the current state of wildlife impact minimization technologies, conditions under which technology vendors or developers would consider participating in a demonstration and validation campaign, and the conditions under which wind farm owner/operators would consider participating in a campaign to demonstrate, field-test, and validate such technologies. Additionally, EERE seeks input on a proposed framework for funding the advancement of wildlife impact minimization technologies aimed at reducing impacts to bats, eagles and other wildlife of concern, and on how to prioritize funding for research within this framework. The RFI is available at: <https://eere-exchange.energy.gov/>.

([http://www.ofr.gov/\(S\(p1j5zp3ymogd5wy3l45k1whv\)\)/OFRUpload/OFRData/2014-15258_PI.pdf](http://www.ofr.gov/(S(p1j5zp3ymogd5wy3l45k1whv))/OFRUpload/OFRData/2014-15258_PI.pdf)).

Eagle Scoping Public Input Process. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is analyzing various aspects of bald and golden eagle management as part of its responsibility under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Public input is an important part of this process. The NEPA analysis will evaluate the environmental effects of a range of alternatives for eagle management, including possible changes to permit regulations. The purpose of the public scoping process with regard to NEPA is to determine relevant issues that could influence the scope of the analysis, including alternatives, and guide the process for developing an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS) and related compliance efforts. (<http://eaglescoping.org/>).

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Extends Decision Deadline for Final ESA Listing Decision on the Northern Long-eared Bat as Endangered. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will extend for six months the deadline on its decision whether to list the northern long-eared bat as endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), providing additional time to resolve questions received during the public comment period regarding the species' population and white-nose syndrome, a disease that has killed millions of bats and poses the greatest threat to this species.

(<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/mammals/nlba/BulletinNLEBexten24June2014.html>).

Tools

Soaring Bird Sensitivity Map: A planning tool for wind energy and other sectors. The Soaring Bird [Sensitivity Map tool](#) has been designed to provide developers, planning authorities and other interested stakeholders access to information on the distribution of soaring bird species along the Rift Valley / Red Sea flyway. This information can help to inform decisions on the safe siting of new developments, such as wind farms, ensuring that negative impacts on this important migration route are minimised. (<http://migratorysoaringbirds.undp.birdlife.org/en/sensitivity-map>).

Energy Department, NREL Release State and Local Energy Data Tool. DOE and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) recently released [SLED, the State and Local Energy Data online tool](#) that provides state and local decision makers easy access to energy data specific to their location. The resources and data provided can be used to support strategic energy planning processes and deployment of clean energy projects. By entering a city and state or ZIP code into the SLED tool, users can see how their current electricity prices compare to the state and national averages, learn about applicable policies and incentives that could affect clean energy projects in their state, find available renewable energy resources, get details on alternative transportation fuel costs, and more. (<http://apps1.eere.energy.gov/sled/#/>).

WINDEXchange is the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Wind Program's hub of stakeholder engagement and outreach activities. The purpose of WINDEXchange is to help communities weigh the benefits and costs of wind energy, understand the deployment process, and make wind development decisions supported by the best available science and other fact-based information. (<http://energy.gov/eere/wind/windexchange>).

National Assessment of Ecosystem Carbon Sequestration and Greenhouse Gas Fluxes. View and download the primary data that has been developed by the USGS team in a variety of formats using the [LandCarbon Data Tool](#). Visualize data products, view and interact with maps, charts, and statistics that summarize the results of the USGS assessment. (http://www.usgs.gov/climate_landuse/land_carbon/Data.asp). **NOTE: Data on carbon sequestration for the ecoregions in Nebraska are not yet available. Other information is available to view at this time.

EISPC EZ Mapping Tool. The EISPC Energy Zones Mapping Tool is a free online mapping tool to identify potential clean energy resource areas within the Eastern Transmission Interconnection. (<https://eispc.tools.anl.gov/>).

Counties with Zoning Regulations in Nebraska has been added to the Nebraska Wind Energy and Wildlife Project website. Several counties have zoning regulations or ordinances for wind energy facilities. Several of the counties with zoning have setbacks for commercial scale wind turbines of 600 feet from Wildlife Management Areas, State Recreational Areas, and Wetlands (USFW Types III, IV, and V). Links to all county zoning regulations found through internet searches are available on the website. Please feel free to contact me at windwildlife@unl.edu with edits, suggestions, etc. (<http://snr.unl.edu/renewableenergy/wind/windenergydevelopment.asp#zoning>).

Nebraska Rare Species Education for Conservation website launched! This new website features images, descriptions, range, habitat, population status, information pamphlets, and more on the 27 threatened and endangered species in Nebraska. The website is a great way to access information on Nebraska's listed species. (<http://rarespecies.nebraska.gov/>).

National Climate Change Viewer. The new tool gives citizens and resource managers the opportunity to look at climate-driven impacts on watersheds and map projected changes at the local, regional, state and watershed levels. (http://www.usgs.gov/climate_landuse/clu_rd/nccv.asp).

National Wetlands Database, interactive mapping tool completed. To coincide with American Wetlands Month, which begins May 1, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is announcing the completion of the most comprehensive and detailed U.S. wetland data set ever produced, capping a 35-year effort by the Service to map the extent of the nation's wetlands. The Wetlands Inventory Mapper (<http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/Data/Mapper.html>) has digitally mapped and made publically available wetlands in the lower 48 states, Hawaii and dependent territories, as well as 35 % of Alaska. (<http://www.agprofessional.com/news/National-Wetlands-Database-interactive-mapping-tool-completed--257553181.html>).

National Wind Coordinating Collaborative (NWCC) Webinars on the Latest Wind-Wildlife Research and Tools. NWCC/AWWI hosts quarterly webinars on the latest research and tools related to the interactions of wind energy, wildlife, and wildlife habitat. The webinars include time for questions after each presentation. To receive the access information for upcoming webinars, please sign up. If you are

interested in sharing your work on a webinar, please contact [Ian Evans](#). (<http://nationalwind.org/research/webinars/>).

[USGS Interactive Windfarm Mapper](#). The USGS created this publicly available [national dataset](#) and [interactive mapping application](#) of wind turbines. This dataset is built with publicly available data, as well as searching for and identifying individual wind turbines using satellite imagery. The locations of all wind turbines, including the publicly available datasets, were visually verified with high-resolution remote imagery to within plus or minus 10 meters. (<http://eerscmap.usgs.gov/windfarm/>).

[Developing a Research Framework for Increasing Understanding of Interactions between Eagles and Wind Energy](#). In this document, we outline a framework for a national, hypothesis-driven research program on eagles and wind energy. The principal goals of this framework are to guide research that improves our ability to predict and estimate take of eagles at wind energy facilities, to develop measures intended to avoid and minimize the take of eagles at operating wind energy facilities, and to compensate for, or offset, remaining eagle take. (http://awwi.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/AWWI-Eagle-Research-Framework_Final-01-23-14.pdf).

[Land-Based Wind Energy Guidelines Webinar Series](#). The USFWS has offered a number of webinars related to the Land-Based Wind Energy Guidelines. Recordings of the webinars, presentations, and transcripts are available at: http://www.fws.gov/windenergy/wind_training/wind_training.html.

The Wildlife Society Renewable Energy Working Group – LinkedIn. Connect with other resource professionals involved in renewable energy – wildlife work. To join, go to: http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=4433729&trk=my_groups-b-grp-v, click Join.

[Upcoming Conferences](#)

[AOU•COS•SCO](#) (American Ornithologists' Union, the Copper Ornithological Society, and the Society of Canadian Ornithologists) Joint Meeting will be **September 23-28, 2014** in Estes Park, CO. There will be a symposium on Avian Interactions with Energy Infrastructure: Challenges of Being Green (Chair: Jen Smith) and Effects on Birds of Unconventional Shale Gas Extraction and the New Energy Boom (Chair: Steve Latta) as well as sessions on migration, population ecology, and much more. (<http://birdmeetings.org/aoucossco2014/>).

[Raptor Research Foundation 2014 Conference](#) will be **September 24-28, 2014** in Corpus Christi, TX. Associated with the conference is an Avian Power Line Interaction Committee (APLIC) Workshop. (<http://www.raptorresearchfoundation.org/conferences/current-conference>).

[The Wildlife Society Annual Conference](#) will be in Pittsburgh, PA **October 25-30, 2014**. The [Renewable Energy Working Group](#) will be offering a [field visit](#) to the Casselman Wind Farm on October 25, 2014. For basic information about the field visit, go to: <http://wildlifesociety.org/learn/field-trips/>. For more detailed information, go to: <http://news.wildlife.org/the-wildlifer-2014-june/news-from-subunits-10/> and search for Renewable Energy Working Group updates.

Wind Wildlife Research Meeting X will be in Broomfield, CO, week of December 1, 2014. Dates TBD. The biennial Wind Wildlife Research Meeting provides an internationally recognized forum for researchers and wind-wildlife stakeholders to hear contributed papers, view research posters, and listen to panels that synthesize the most recent wind power-related wildlife research. (<http://nationalwind.org/save-the-date-wind-wildlife-research-meeting-x/>).

7th Annual Nebraska Wind & Solar Conference & Exhibition: Turning Challenges into Nebraska Opportunities will be on **October 29th and 30th** in LaVista, Nebraska. There are sponsor and exhibitor opportunities at varying price levels. If you have presentation ideas, you can submit them to: admin@nebraskawindconference.com. (<http://nebraskawindandsolarconference.com/>).

Conference on Wind energy and Wildlife impacts will be in Berlin, Germany, March 10-12, 2015. (<http://www.cww2015.tu-berlin.de/>).

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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