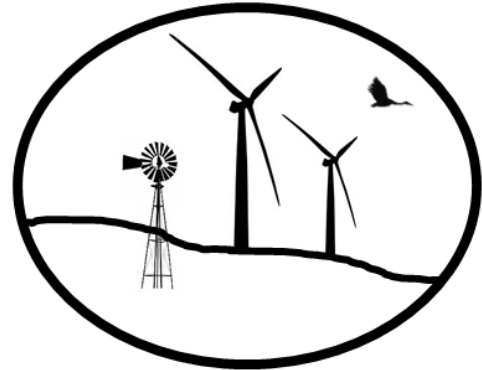


Nebraska Wind Energy and Wildlife News

May 4, 2015



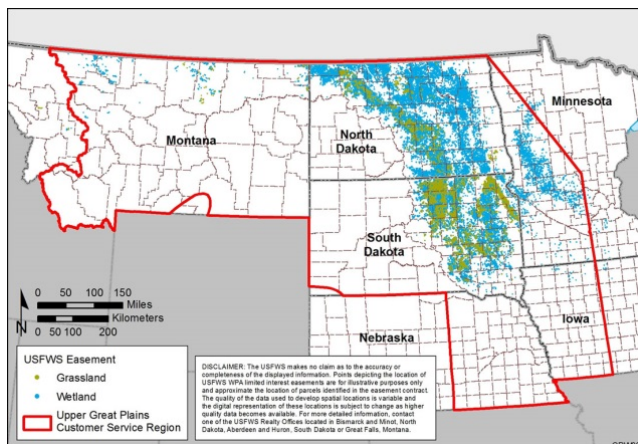
Around Nebraska...

Nebraska Legislative Bills

It is Legislative Session time again! Several bills related to energy and transmission have been introduced. **Two bills have updates from today, May 4, 2015.** The [Nebraska Legislative Bills](#) and updates are listed at the end of the message.

[Nebraska renewable energy tax credit bill sparks debate.](#) An effort to lure more wind farms to Nebraska sparked a debate Tuesday among lawmakers, including some who questioned the use of state [tax](#) credits to help the industry. (<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/apr/21/nebraska-renewable-energy-tax-credit-bill-sparks-d/>).

[Wind energy tax credit breezes to 2nd round in Nebraska Legislature.](#) State senators amended and then advanced a bill Wednesday that would provide a first-ever production tax credit for wind farms and other renewable energy facilities. The 25-3 vote to advance the proposal from the first round came after a long debate over whether such a tax break could succeed in creating an incentive or whether Nebraska is too late to become a big player in wind energy. (http://www.omaha.com/money/wind-energy-tax-credit-breezes-to-nd-round-in-nebraska/article_95b2ec5c-7845-50c5-97e0-c3017f0af37d.html).



[Final Upper Great Plains Wind Energy PEIS](#) is now available. Western Area Power Administration and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have prepared a PEIS to evaluate the impacts of wind energy development in Western's Upper Great Plains Region (all or parts of Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota), and on the Service's grassland and wetland easements in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Montana. The PEIS identifies mitigation strategies, best management practices, and comprehensive environmental review procedures for evaluating future wind energy projects.

Impacts and mitigation were analyzed for each environmental resource, and all aspects of wind energy projects were addressed, including construction and installation of: turbines; transformers; collector lines; access roads; and substations; as well as operation and maintenance of these facilities. (<http://plainswindeis.anl.gov/documents/fpeis/index.cfm>).

[Scholar co-authors Science study quantifying ecosystem loss.](#) A University of Nebraska-Lincoln rangeland ecologist is among the co-authors of [a study published in Science](#) that has quantified land use change and the reduction of ecosystem and cropland productivity stemming from large-scale expansion of oil and gas development. “Land use is changing in the Great Plains, and there is considerable momentum for further conversion of our nation’s rangelands to support energy demand,” Twidwell said. “Whether we are talking about advances in oil and gas development, wind or biofuels, we should be aware of our growing energy footprint and how it might influence some of our last remaining iconic rangeland ecosystems, like the Nebraska Sandhills.” (<http://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/unltoday/article/scholar-co-authors-science-study-quantifying-ecosystem-loss/>).

[Ecosystem services lost to oil and gas in North America.](#) Allred et al. 2015, Science. (<http://www.sciencemag.org/content/348/6233/401.full>).

[Feds move to speed approval for wind projects.](#) Federal officials are moving to speed up their review of wind power projects across the Upper Great Plains in anticipation that the industry will continue growing, a situation that’s alarmed wildlife advocates who say many bird and bat species are being put at risk as wind turbines proliferate. (<http://www.argusleader.com/story/news/2015/04/23/feds-move-speed-approval-wind-projects/26250357/>).

[Berkshire Hathaway subsidiary to build wind farm project.](#) A subsidiary of Warren Buffett’s Berkshire Hathaway Inc. will announce Thursday that it plans to build the Grande Prairie Wind Farm, which would be Nebraska’s largest wind-powered electric generating plant and increase the state’s wind energy capacity by nearly 50 percent. (http://www.omaha.com/money/berkshire-hathaway-subsi-dary-to-build-wind-farm-project/article_1639b4a6-b56e-5348-a7dd-f48ff67ccf64.html).

[BHE Renewables Announces Plans For Largest Wind Development In Nebraska.](#) BHE Renewables, a subsidiary of Berkshire Hathaway Energy, announced plans to construct a 400-megawatt wind farm in Holt County, Nebraska – the largest wind energy project in the state’s history. (<http://www.wowt.com/home/headlines/OPPD-To-Work-On-Largest-Wind-Development-In-Nebraska-301818851.html>).

[400MW plain sailing for Vestas.](#) Vestas has secured a 400MW order from Berkshire Hathaway for the Grande Prairie wind farm in Nebraska. The Danish manufacturer will supply 200 of its V110-2MW hardware (pictured) to the wind farm alongside a five-year service deal. (<http://renews.biz/87932/vestas-catches-400mw-prairie-breeze/>).

[County board tables support of wind farm project.](#) The Platte County Board of Supervisors has yet to give its support to a wind farm project that is already underway south of Creston. On Tuesday, the board tabled a resolution of support and county road agreement with Bluestem Energy Solutions. The Omaha-based wind energy company will be installing four turbines near 205th Avenue (Mason Road) for a commercial wind farm known as Creston Ridge Wind LLC. (<http://columbustelegram.com/news/local/b20edb3b-a00f-53d1-a44c-9ebe74464bbb.html>).

[Road work begins to prepare for wind farm.](#) Construction crews are making way for the Creston Ridge Wind Farm as access roads are being built for the wind towers near here. The wind farm is located along 205th Avenue (Mason Road) between 445th Street and 460th Street, or about 2.5 miles south of Highway 91. Omaha-based Bluestem Energy Solutions will locate, construct and maintain the wind farm and sell the electricity generated to Loup Power District. (http://norfolkdailynews.com/news/road-work-begins-to-prepare-for-wind-farm/article_3d40bb94-ea89-11e4-b2b2-9f27fe011ad6.html).

[Wind farm opponents organize.](#) A group fighting the development of a 110-turbine wind farm was organized April 14 with 40 members. Early this week, the Bohemian Alps Wind Watchers counted more than 100 area landowners and residents who hope they can halt the Jubilee Wind Farm Project proposed by NEXtera Energy, LLC, before it gets a foothold, said John Stanner, one of the organizers. The

mission statement of the group: "The Bohemian Alps Wind Watchers is a group of local volunteers that is dedicated to raising awareness about industrial scale wind farms and their negative impacts to our rural landscape, local economy and wildlife." (http://columbustelegram.com/banner-press/news/wind-farm-opponents-organize/article_63e2aaaf-1c8e-5bdc-b985-d19a6db4d76e.html).

[Hassebrook joins wind energy firm](http://journalstar.com/legislature/hassebrook-joins-wind-energy-firm/article_c78c6220-19a5-5aa7-a6bc-ab9f96c06fba.html). Chuck Hassebrook, the 2014 Democratic nominee for governor and former executive director of the Center for Rural Affairs, has joined a wind energy firm. Hassebrook will be vice president for renewable energy export for Sandhills Wind Energy, which is based in Valentine. (http://journalstar.com/legislature/hassebrook-joins-wind-energy-firm/article_c78c6220-19a5-5aa7-a6bc-ab9f96c06fba.html).

[2015 Migration Season Summary: Hundreds of Species, Thousands of Birds and Visitors, and Eleven Whooping Cranes](http://cranetrust.org/enewsletter/2015-migration-season-summary/?utm_source=Spring+2015+e-Newsletter&utm_campaign=e-News+Spring+2015&utm_medium=email). The Crane Trust conducts aerial surveys each week for the duration of the sandhill crane migration in order to understand and communicate to the public how the spring crane migration is progressing. However, the highlight of the aerial survey season happened during the last flight in mid-April. As the single-engine plane flew over the river looking for sandhill cranes, very few could be found. Instead, in their place were three separate groups of Whooping Cranes equaling eleven total. (http://cranetrust.org/enewsletter/2015-migration-season-summary/?utm_source=Spring+2015+e-Newsletter&utm_campaign=e-News+Spring+2015&utm_medium=email).

Wind – Wildlife Position

[Post-doctoral Research Associate: Wind Energy and Wildlife Analyst](http://www.conservation-careers.com/job/post-doctoral-research-associate-wind-energy-and-wildlife-analyst/). This is a non-tenure leading post-doctoral research associate position established for a period of one year with Dr. Larkin Powell and Dr. Mary Bomberger Brown at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Continuation of this position beyond one year is contingent upon the availability of grant funding and satisfactory accomplishment of assigned responsibilities, up to a maximum of 18 months. (<http://www.conservation-careers.com/job/post-doctoral-research-associate-wind-energy-and-wildlife-analyst/>).

Around the Nation & World...

Wind and Wildlife

[Consolidating the State of Knowledge: A Synoptical Review of Wind Energy's Wildlife Effects](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25910869), Schuster et al. 2015, Environmental Management. This review article aims to consolidate the state of knowledge, providing a qualitative analysis of the main effects of wind energy development on- and offshore, focusing on frequently studied species groups (bats, breeding and resting birds, raptors, migratory birds, marine mammals). We reviewed over 220 publications from which we identified predominant hypotheses that were summarized and displayed in tables. Consolidating the state of research provides the groundwork for the identification of mitigation measures and advanced planning approaches. However, the quantification of effects remains challenging and uncertainties will always persist. (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25910869>).

[Scientists recommend airspace reserves to protect flying wildlife](http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2015/5/1/scientists-call-for-airspace-reserves.html). Human use of airspace for transportation, energy generation and surveillance have contributed to deadly conflicts with wildlife — underlining the need for airspace reserves to protect flying animals and their habitat from ecological disaster, scientists said a report published Friday. "The resulting collision and disturbance risks profoundly affect species ecology and conservation," the authors said. "Yet aerial interactions between humans and wildlife are often neglected when considering the ecological consequences of human activities." (<http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2015/5/1/scientists-call-for-airspace-reserves.html>).

[Human-wildlife conflicts in a crowded airspace](http://www.sciencemag.org/content/348/6234/502.full), Lambertucci et al. 2015, Science. (<http://www.sciencemag.org/content/348/6234/502.full>).

[Assessing Future Energy Development across the Appalachians](#). The Nature Conservancy - with support from the Appalachian LCC - has completed a study to assist policy makers, land management agencies, and industry in assessing potential future energy development and how that may overlap with biological and ecological values. (<http://applcc.org/conservation-design/gis-planning/gis-tools-resources/assessing-future-energy-development-1/assessing-future-energy-development>).

[Learning how to prevent bird-turbine collisions](#). A trained falcon named Houdini darts and soars next to a wind power plant in the shadow of the Colorado Rockies, gathering radar data that could someday save the lives of his avian brethren. Peregrine gyrfalcon Houdini is the VIP guest of the Energy Department's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), and he performs his strategic flights at the National Wind Technology Center (NWTC), 12 miles north of NREL's main campus. (<http://www.windpowerengineering.com/policy/environmental/learning-how-to-prevent-bird-turbine-collisions/>).

[Wind company to make changes to save endangered bat](#). Wind farms have been popping up in rural areas of Northern New York. Wind energy doesn't burn fossil fuels or emit greenhouse gases. But while wind farms may be a positive step for the environment in one way, they also can kill birds and bats. Now, the company behind a wind farm in Copenhagen is working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to determine how to prevent deaths of these winged creatures before they occur. (<http://wrvo.org/post/wind-company-make-changes-save-endangered-bat>).

[The Northern Long-Eared Bat: What A Threatened Listing Means For Wind Energy Projects](#). Threatened species are those at risk of becoming endangered, and such a listing triggers a number of regulatory requirements to prevent further declines. The threatened listing provides the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) with the ability to provide some flexibility in implementing the Endangered Species Act (ESA) by identifying exemptions under Section 4(d) of the ESA. (http://www.nawindpower.com/e107_plugins/content/content.php?content.14165).

[Study tracking where bird migration paths could cross offshore wind zone](#). Bird watchers know where sea ducks like the surf scoter breed — across Canada and Alaska — and where they spend their winters — along the U.S. coasts, in bodies of water like the Chesapeake and Delaware bays. Where they go in between is a bit of a mystery. But with wind turbines possibly dotting the horizon off of [Ocean City](#) beaches by the end of the decade, potentially creating a new obstacle on the birds' migration routes, answers are needed. Teams have spent three years in waters from Long Island to the Carolinas in search of surf scoters and two other types of sea birds, capturing them and releasing them with tracking devices. Scientists finished their tagging last month and have begun collecting data on their movement patterns, planning to continue following the birds as long as possible. (<http://www.baltimoresun.com/features/green/blog/bs-hs-offshore-bird-migration-20150502-story.html#page=1>).

[Biological Surveys Within Offshore Wind Energy Areas \(video\)](#). Check out this great video that explains the why and how surveys are conducted to determine marine areas sensitive to offshore development. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Tynnl5Udp0>).

[Offshore wind farm risk to seabirds varies between years](#). Offshore wind farms are now operating or being constructed all around the UK as the government invests in renewable energy, but what are the consequences of such developments for our wildlife? New research by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) has used state-of-the-art GPS tags to show how Lesser Black-backed Gulls breeding at a protected site in Suffolk use areas of sea where offshore wind farms already exist, and where future developments are earmarked. (<http://www.surfbirds.com/community-blogs/blog/2015/04/25/offshore-wind-farm-risk-to-seabirds-varies-between-years/>).

[Can the North Sea Wind Boom And Seabird Colonies Coexist?](#) Offshore wind farms have been proliferating in the North Sea, with more huge projects planned. But conservationists are concerned this clean energy source could threaten seabird colonies that now thrive in the sea's shallow

waters. ([http://e360.yale.edu/feature/can the north sea wind boom and seabird colonies coexist/2869/](http://e360.yale.edu/feature/can_the_north_sea_wind_boom_and_seabird_colonies_coexist/2869/)).

[SSE windfarm at Strathy South could take over 20 years to become carbon neutral](#). It has been revealed that a windfarm due to be considered at a delayed public inquiry commencing today (Thursday 23rd April) could take up to 24.8 years to 'pay back' the carbon impacts of its construction. Whilst most windfarms generate significant climate benefits by reducing emissions, when windfarms are built on peatland sites these benefits can be significantly reduced. (<http://www.surfbirds.com/community-blogs/blog/2015/04/25/sse-windfarm-at-strathy-south-could-take-over-20-years-to-become-carbon-neutral/>).

Wildlife

[AIDS Drug May Work Against Bat Disease](#). Drugs that are widely used to treat HIV/AIDS and hepatitis C could in future treat white nose syndrome in bats, new research suggests. (<http://news.discovery.com/animals/endangered-species/aids-drug-may-work-against-bat-disease-150504.htm>).

[Bat Wings Harbor Special Sensory Cells](#). Bats can flutter, hover, dive-bomb and change directions midair with tremendous agility. They owe part of their incredible nocturnal navigation to echolocation, of course. But new [research](#) highlights another, underappreciated source of a bat's amazing abilities: the wing. Bat wings sport a unique touch-receptor [design](#), researchers report today (April 30) in the journal Cell Reports. Tiny sensory cells associated with fine hairs on [the bat wing](#) likely enable the animals to change the shape of their wings in a split second, granting them impressive midair maneuverability. (<http://www.livescience.com/50684-bat-wings-harbor-special-sensory-cells.html>).

[Canada Signs Agreement With US and Mexico To Protect Migratory Species](#). Canada, United States and Mexico have signed an agreement stating protection of migratory bats. The three countries have agreed in supporting conservation of bats in North America. (<http://au.ibtimes.com/canada-signs-agreement-us-mexico-protect-migratory-species-1444138>).

[Fish and Wildlife rules Bi-State population of greater sage-grouse doesn't need ESA protection](#). "Our biologists have determined that this population no longer needs ESA protection," said Jewell. "What's more, the collaborative, science-based efforts in Nevada and California are proof that we can conserve sagebrush habitat across the West while we encourage sustainable economic development." (<http://westgov.org/news/340-news-2015/938-fish-and-wildlife-rules-bi-state-population-of-greater-sage-grouse-doesn-t-need-esa-protection>).

[How Whales Help Sequester CO2](#). In what's known as a [trophic cascade](#) (defined as an ecological process in which predators in a food web suppress the abundance or alter behavior of their prey, thereby releasing the next lower trophic level from predation or herbivory), whales help to sustain the entire ocean system. While they eat tons of fish and krill every year, [whales](#) actually help to keep them alive. Check out the great informative video. (<http://goodnature.nathab.com/video-how-whales-help-sequester-co2/>).

[Using humor to protect 'ugly' animals, because they can't all be as cute as pandas](#). Go to any zoo that boasts having a giant panda, and you'll see its cute face plastered on everything from T-shirts to key chains. But imagine going to the zoo and being welcomed with a banner featuring a big ol' flabby hooded seal with its flaring red nostril. Only in an alternate universe, right? Not necessarily, thinks Simon Watt. He's the founder of the Ugly Animal Preservation Society, a UK-based group that uses comedy to promote awareness of endangered, aesthetically challenged animals. (<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/updates/using-humor-to-protect-ugly-animals-because-they-cant-all-be-as-cute-as-pandas/>).

Wind

[Quantifying the contribution of wind farms to distribution network reliability](#), S. Blake et al. 2015, *Wind Energy*. It concludes that under certain circumstances, the presence of embedded wind generation can allow the deferral of costly network reinforcement projects but that the time for which reinforcement can reasonably be deferred is a function not only of the generators themselves but also of the surrounding network. (<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/we.1741/abstract?campaign=woletoc>).

[Nirvana Fallacy: Must Wind Energy be 100%?](#) Logical fallacies are frequently employed by politicians and news media to short-circuit a thoughtful and critically thinking public. For example, several arguments against wind power and other renewable energies frequently suffer from the "Nirvana Fallacy". The Nirvana Fallacy is named after the Buddhist philosophy of a state of perfection (not Kurt Cobain's rock band). (<http://blog.cleanenergy.org/2015/04/28/nirvana-fallacy-must-wind-energy-be-100/>).

[The Wind Power Industry Could Lose The Subsidy Tailwind At It's Back](#). For the two decades, investors in wind [energy](#) have been buoyed by nearly \$9 billion in federal and state subsidies and giveaways. In the case of the wind industry, it's looking like just such a twist is coming as the days of government support for the industry appear to be coming to an end. (<http://www.forbes.com/sites/chrisversace/2015/05/03/the-wind-power-industry-could-lose-the-subsidy-tailwind-at-its-back/>).

[Despite flawed assumptions, NERC analysis finds Clean Power Plan achievable](#). A report released today by the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) found that the Clean Power Plan can be met with modest changes in the generation mix. The required changes, chiefly displacing coal generation with cleaner alternatives, are actually less aggressive than the generation mix change trajectory we have seen over the last decade as the cost of cleaner energy sources like renewable energy and natural gas has declined. (<http://www.aweablog.org/despite-flawed-assumptions-nerc-analysis-finds-clean-power-plan-achievable/>).

[First U.S. Offshore Wind Project Breaks Ground](#). Block Island calls itself the "Last Great Place," but this small island 12 miles off the coast of Rhode Island is first in the hearts of environmentalists and clean energy advocates across the nation today. Big things are happening just off the shore of that little island. That's where [Deepwater Wind](#) has started construction on America's first-ever offshore wind project. (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/mary-anne-hitt/first-us-offshore-wind-pr_b_7154792.html).

[Wyoming-to-California lines for wind power clear hurdle](#). A planned 730-mile power line project to export Wyoming wind power to Southern California has passed a significant regulatory milestone with the release of a federal environmental study. The U.S. Bureau of Land Management on Friday opened a 30-day period in which it will accept any protests against land use changes for the TransWest Express project in the works since 2007. (http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/wyoming/wyoming-to-california-lines-for-wind-power-clear-hurdle/article_33243b10-3550-517a-99f6-b999149a2786.html).

Solar

[Solar Plant Likely Killed 3,500 Birds in 1st Year](#). According to the firm H.T. Harvey and Associates, the Ivanpah Solar Electric Generating System was the [site of somewhere between 2,500 and 6,700 bird mortalities in the plant's first year of operation](#), between October 2013 and October 2014. The firm says the most likely actual figure is somewhere around 3,500 birds killed in that time. (<http://www.kcet.org/news/redo/rewire/solar/solar-plant-likely-killed-3500-birds-in-first-year.html>).

[Poor data make tallies of bird deaths 'impossible' -- federal study](#). A federal analysis of avian mortality at utility-scale solar facilities released earlier this week with little fanfare was unable to determine the cumulative impact on birds posed by the 1-megawatt-or-greater installations. The [report](#) was produced by the environmental science division of Argonne National Laboratory and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory with funding from the Department of Energy's SunShot Initiative -- a

project that seeks to make solar energy cost-competitive with other forms of electricity by the end of the decade. (<http://www.eenews.net/stories/1060017651>).

Other

[New Study Links Weather Extremes to Global Warming](#). The moderate [global warming](#) that has already occurred as a result of human emissions has quadrupled the frequency of certain heat extremes since the Industrial Revolution, scientists reported Monday, and they warned that a failure to bring greenhouse gases under control could eventually lead to a 62-fold increase in such heat blasts. (http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/28/science/new-study-links-weather-extremes-to-global-warming.html?smid=li-share&_r=0).

[Anthropogenic contribution to global occurrence of heavy-precipitation and high-temperature extremes](#). Fischer and Knutti 2015, *Nature Climate Change*. (<http://www.nature.com/nclimate/journal/oaop/nclimate/current/pdf/nclimate2617.pdf>).

[Analysis says 114th Congress Failing on Climate, Water, Wildlife](#). As the 114th Congress moves toward its 114th day, a briefing from conservation and environmental groups is giving Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and his colleagues a failing grade thus far on lands, water, wildlife and climate action. - (<http://www.publicnewsservice.org/2015-04-24/environment/analysis-says-114th-congress-failing-on-climate-water-wildlife/a45894-1>).

[Greater Investments in Energy Infrastructure Stressed in White House Quadrennial Review](#). The U.S. needs to invest in modernizing and updating its aging energy infrastructure to promote economic competitiveness, energy security and environmental responsibility, an April 21 White House report recommended. (<http://www.bna.com/greater-investments-energy-n17179925495/>).

Announcements

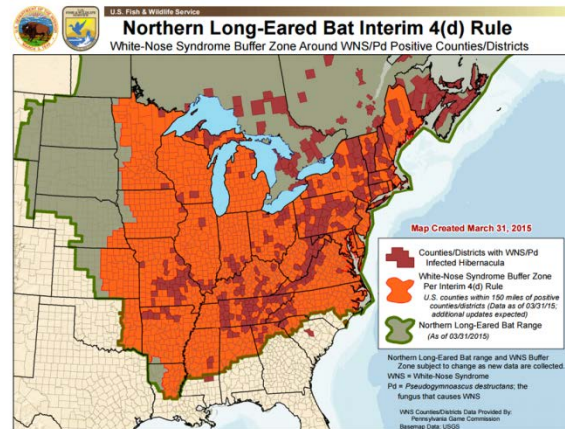
[Service Protects Northern Long-eared Bat as Threatened Species under Endangered Species Act with Interim 4\(d\) Rule](#). The listing becomes effective on May 4, 2015, 30 days after publication of the final listing determination in the Federal Register. (<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/mammals/nlba/>).

[USFWS Approved Automated Acoustic Bat ID Software Programs](#). Specified versions of the programs identified below are approved by the Service for use in 2015 and beyond for presence/probable absence surveys for Indiana bats (*Myotis sodalis*). These programs have been independently tested by USGS researchers and passed the Service's standardized test/validation process.

1. BCID Program (version 2.7b or newer)
2. EchoClass (version 3.0 or newer)
3. Kaleidoscope® Pro (version 2.2.2 or newer)

(<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/Endangered/mammals/inba/surveys/inbaAcousticSoftware.html>).

[Iberdrola Renewables Seeks Applicants for Wildlife Grants](#). Iberdrola Renewables announced it is seeking applicants for its 2015 Wildlife Protection Program (WPP) grants. The company's ongoing "Legacy of Caring" campaign for wildlife and habitat awards WPP grants to avian rehabilitation groups. These partners play an important role in rehabilitation, community education and scientific understanding of birds of prey.



http://www.yourrenewablenews.com/iberdrola+renewables+seeks+applicants+for+wildlife+grants_114363.html).

[USGCRP Climate & Health Assessment](#). Climate change threatens human health and well-being [in many ways](#). The draft report, The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States: A Scientific Assessment (available to download below), was developed by USGCRP's [Interagency Group on Climate Change and Human Health](#) as part of the [sustained National Climate Assessment](#) and as called for under the President's [Climate Action Plan](#). Public Comment Period Now Open. (<http://www.globalchange.gov/health-assessment>).

[2014 Wind Wildlife Research Meeting X Proceedings](#). These Proceedings capture and summarize the work of nearly 100 presenters on a wide array of wind-wildlife topics being addressed by industry, policy-makers, conservation groups, and scientists. Major focus areas include technologies for detecting and deterring wildlife, assessing risk to eagles, and assessing mechanisms to avoid and minimize impacts on bats. (https://nationalwind.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/AWWI-NWCC-WWRM-X_Proceedings_Final.pdf).

[Upcoming Conferences & Trainings](#)

[Wind and Wildlife Workshop](#). May 19-22, 2015. Broomfield, CO. This 3 day workshop will combine science, conservation, and education to provide participants with the latest in research and monitoring techniques. (<https://www.batcon.org/component/batevents/form?view=form&layout=signup&eventid=92>).

[AWEA Wind Power Conference & Exhibition](#). May 18-21, 2015. Orlando, FL. (<http://www.windpowerexpo.org/>).

[The Effects of Noise on Aquatic Life](#). The fourth International Conference on "The Effects of Noise on Aquatic Life" will take place in Dublin, Ireland, July 10-16, 2016. (<http://www.an2016.org/>).

[Tools](#)

[Minecraft Makes Wind Farm Development Projects Accessible](#). New guidance for the visualisation of wind farms development understands that "stakeholder engagement is extremely important" and recognises that new developments have "considerable scope" for use as techniques are developed and presented. In support of this guidance, Linknode today announced that development of a Minecraft version of its interactive visualisation and communication tools for wind farm development has reached preview stage. (<http://www.ventusar.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Linknode-Minecraft-for-Wind-Farm-Visualisation.pdf>).

[U.S. Resilience Toolkit](#). Individuals, businesses, and communities can respond to the challenges of our changing climate. This framework can guide you through the process of planning and implementing resilience-building projects. (<https://toolkit.climate.gov/>).

[Landsat on AWS](#). The [Landsat](#) program is a joint effort of the [U.S. Geological Survey](#) and [NASA](#). First launched in 1972, the Landsat series of satellites has produced the longest, continuous record of Earth's land surface as seen from space. AWS has made Landsat 8 data freely available on Amazon S3 so that anyone can use our on-demand computing resources to perform analysis and create new products without needing to worry about the cost of storing Landsat data or the time required to download it. (<http://aws.amazon.com/public-data-sets/landsat/>).

[US Solar & Wind Associations Release Renewable Energy Handbook](#). Two US renewable energy associations, the American Wind Energy Association and the Solar Energy Industries Association, have jointly published a handbook that details how states can incorporate renewable energy into their plans to comply with US policy regulations. (<http://cleantechnica.com/2015/03/31/us-solar-wind-associations-release-renewable-energy-handbook/>).

[WGA launches RAPID Toolkit to speed, streamline siting and permitting of transmission lines](#). Western Governors have rolled out the [RAPID Toolkit](#), an online tool that streamlines the challenge of siting and permitting transmission lines in the West. The online tool is the culmination of a multi-year effort by Western Governors to tackle the challenge of transmission line siting and permitting. (<http://westgov.org/news/298-news-2014/847-wga-launches-rapid-toolkit-to-speed-streamline-siting-and-permitting-of-transmission-lines>).

Webinars

[Webinar #3: Understanding Avian Collision Rate Modeling and Discussing what this Means in a Population Context at Land-Based and Offshore Windfarms](#). Wind farms can impact birds through collisions, barrier effects and displacement and habitat loss. Of these, collisions have attracted the most attention as the effects of direct mortality are considered to have the greatest potential to impact bird populations. (<http://tethys.pnnl.gov/events/webinar-3-understanding-avian-collision-rate-modeling-and-discussing-what-means-population>).

[WINDEXchange Webinar: Overcoming Wind Siting Challenges: Overview and Wildlife](#). Siting issues are a complex and challenging aspect of turbine installations for developers. The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) is finishing research on national siting considerations this spring, and other agencies and organizations have created tools designed to help support wind siting decisions. (http://apps2.eere.energy.gov/wind/windexchange/filter_detail.asp?itemid=4739).

Nebraska Legislative Bills (updates in red, * indicates Senator Priority Bills)

[LB117](#) - Change provisions relating to energy financing contracts. Introduced by Haar on January 9, 2015; Referred to Revenue Committee on January 12, 2015; Notice of Hearing for March 4, 2015; Statement of Intent and Fiscal Note. A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to energy; to amend sections 66-1062, 66-1064, 66-1065, and 66-1066, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska; to redefine terms; to change provisions relating to energy financing contracts between energy service companies and governmental units; to harmonize provisions; and to repeal the original sections. (http://nebraskalegislature.gov/bills/view_bill.php?DocumentID=24434).

***[LB407](#)** - Change and eliminate provisions relating to certified renewable export facilities as prescribed. Introduced by Haar on January 16, 2015; Referred to Natural Resources Committee on January 20, 2015; Notice of Hearing for March 4, 2015; Statement of Intent and Fiscal Note; Haar priority bill (March 11, 2015); Senator Priority Bill (March 12, 2015). A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to public power; to amend sections 70-1001.01 and 70-1014.02, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2014; to eliminate provisions relating to criteria for approval of certain facilities as prescribed; to harmonize provisions; to repeal the original sections; and to outright repeal section 70-1028, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2014. (http://nebraskalegislature.gov/bills/view_bill.php?DocumentID=24692).

[LB412](#) - Change provisions relating to the Rural Community-Based Energy Development Act. Introduced by Mello on January 16, 2015; Referred to Natural Resources Committee on January 20, 2015; Notice of Hearing for February 20, 2015; Statement of Intent, Committee Statement, and Fiscal Note; Placed on General File on March 4, 2015; **Enrollment and Review [ER110](#) filed on April 30, 2015 (pending)**. A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to Rural Community-Based Energy Development Act; to amend sections 70-1907, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, and 70-1903, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2014; to redefine a term; to change requirements for project developers; and to repeal the original sections. (http://nebraskalegislature.gov/bills/view_bill.php?DocumentID=24483).

***[LB423](#)** - Change a renewable energy tax credit. Introduced by Nordquist on January 16, 2015; Referred to Revenue Committee on January 20, 2015; Notice of Hearing for February 25, 2015; Statement of Intent and Fiscal Note; Nordquist priority bill (March 12, 2015); Placed on General File and Revenue filed AM1103 (pending) on April 2, 2015; Committee Statement; Senator Priority Bill (March 12, 2015); **Several Amendments has been proposed (May 4, 2015)**. A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to revenue and taxation;

to amend section 77-27,235, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2014; to change a renewable energy tax credit; and to repeal the original section.
(http://nebraskalegislature.gov/bills/view_bill.php?DocumentID=24475).

***LB469** - Provide procedures and reporting requirements relating to a state plan on carbon dioxide emissions and require a strategic state energy plan. Introduced by Smith on January 20, 2015; Senator Priority Bill; Advanced to Enrollment and Review Initial on April 20, 2015; **Amendments proposed and Advanced to Enrollment and Review for Engrossment on May 4, 2015**. A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to the environment; to define terms; and to provide powers and duties to the Department of Environmental Quality relating to the development of a state plan for regulating carbon dioxide emissions.
(http://nebraskalegislature.gov/bills/view_bill.php?DocumentID=24978).

AM833 – Amends LB469 to include LB583; March 11, 2015.
(<http://nebraskalegislature.gov/FloorDocs/104/PDF/AM/AM833.pdf>).

LB583 – *Require a state energy plan*. Introduced by Schilz on January 21, 2015; Referred to Natural Resources Committee on January 23, 2015; Notice of Hearing for February 11, 2015; Statement of Intent and Fiscal Note. A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to the State Energy Office; to require a state energy plan; and to provide powers and duties.
(http://nebraskalegislature.gov/bills/view_bill.php?DocumentID=25072).

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.

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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