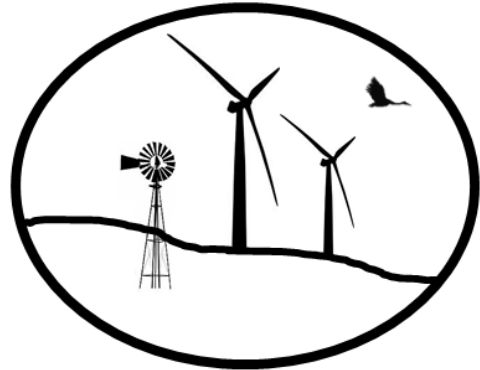


Nebraska Wind Energy and Wildlife News

June 1, 2015



Around Nebraska...

Nebraska Legislative Bills

Two bills were approved by the Governor this week. The [Nebraska Legislative Bills](#) and updates are listed at the end of the message.

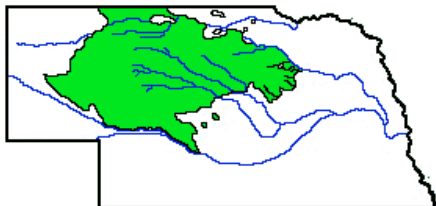
[Wind energy development bill blocked.](#) A proposal to stimulate development of wind energy projects in Nebraska with a \$75 million package of enhanced state tax credits was trapped by a filibuster Tuesday and removed from the 2015 legislative agenda. (http://journalstar.com/legislature/wind-energy-development-bill-blocked/article_85f92b83-7179-52af-8e37-b489d4de3a5a.html).

[Filibuster kills proposed tax credits for wind farms, other renewable energy facilities.](#) A bill that would have provided Nebraska's first-ever production tax credits for wind farms and other renewable energy facilities died Tuesday in the face of a filibuster. Backers could only muster 30 votes on a motion to end the filibuster and proceed with second-round consideration of [Legislative Bill 423](#). The motion needed 33 votes to succeed. (http://www.omaha.com/news/legislature/filibuster-kills-proposed-tax-credits-for-wind-farms-other-renewable/article_5ce6710f-c762-5c6b-8e5f-a910eb815cf2.html).

MITIGATION DOLLARS AT WORK: [Robart Family and Wind Power Protect Sandstone Prairie.](#) In early 2014, Bob and Cheryl said "It became evident that our lifelong commitment to conservation could be enhanced by placing a conservation easement on this beautiful piece of original tallgrass prairie." Conservation of the prairie was also made possible by funding from the Steele Flats Wind Project, cooperation from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Nebraska Game & Parks Commission, and the Nebraska Land Trust. As a result, an all-too-rare piece of Nebraska's vanishing prairie heritage is now forever protected. (<http://www.nelandtrust.org/robart-family-and-wind-power-protect-sandstone-prairie/>).

[Ranchers; Nebraska's Prairie Conservation Heroes.](#) Over the past two hundred years the American Midwest, like much of our country, has been cut up, paved, and transformed into something unrecognizable to the settlers and Native Americans of the past. However, there is one group of people who have lived with the land and done more to conserve our native ecosystems than any other group or organization. These conservationists are ranchers. (<http://www.nelandtrust.org/ranchers-nebraskas-prairie-conservation-heroes/>).

[The Sandhills.](#) The Nebraska Sandhills is a unique area, both in size and appearance. Native grassland covers 19,600 square miles of wind-deposited sand dunes. Its geology makes the area rich for wildlife, water and ranching. The Sandhills Habitat Program is an ecosystem management approach based on an understanding of the Sandhills' geologic and economic forces that shape the natural environment of the region. Without knowing the land and the people, management is ineffective. (<http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/pfw/ne/ne4.htm>).



[Greater prairie-chicken brood-site selection and survival in the Nebraska sandhills](#), Anderson et al. 2015, The Journal of Wildlife Management. We suggest that land managers in the Sandhills region provide brooding habitat in grazed, upland ecological sites that is characterized by minimal bare ground, a consistent distribution of litter, a forb component, and VOR levels of 4–11 cm in pastures in the vicinity of leks. (<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/jwmg.876/abstract>).

[Local wind farm discussion continues](#). The debate continues at the county level whether to allow wind energy company Volkswind to put up turbines between southern Lancaster and northern Gage counties. (<http://www.klknv.com/story/29161508/local-wind-farm-discussion-continues>).

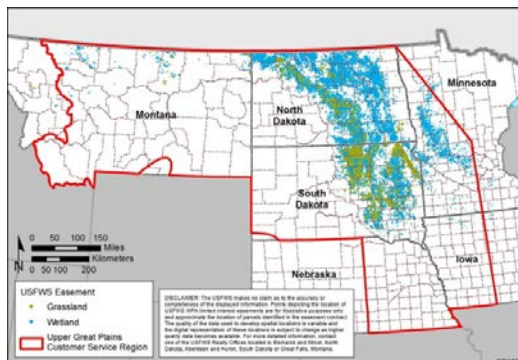
[Proposed turbine noise rules would be most restrictive in state](#). Proposed noise rules being drafted to regulate commercial wind turbines in Lancaster County are so restrictive they would effectively prevent wind projects being developed here, according to a Portland, Oregon-based company that wants to develop a 50-turbine farm in Lancaster and Gage counties. (http://journalstar.com/news/local/proposed-turbine-noise-rules-would-be-most-restrictive-in-state/article_84059e27-44b0-56d2-83f4-777a4b45d7bb.html).

[County may enhance wind regulations](#). Lancaster County is expected to adopt new wind farm regulations restrictive enough they may prevent future developments, and Gage County will likely follow suit. County board member Matt Bauman said setback requirements will likely be changed for nonparticipating residences, those homes that are near a wind turbine but whose property owners are not associated with the turbine. (http://beatricedailysun.com/news/local/county-may-enhance-wind-regulations/article_a8ba8ce5-1d8a-53bb-a783-b9844ac29fad.html).

[Warren Buffett Is Betting Big on Wind Energy in Nebraska, and Other Planet-Saving News](#). **[BHE Renewables](#)**, a subsidiary of Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway, Inc., is going to open a 400 megawatt wind farm in Nebraska in 2016 that will increase the state's wind-generated electricity by 50% and take the state closer to its goal of getting a third of its power from renewables. Nebraska currently has 800 MW of wind-provided electrical power. The state utility will buy all of the new production. (http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/warren_buffett_is_betting_big_on_wind_energy_in_nebraska_20150506).

[Employee killed near wind farm construction site](#). The U.S. Department of Labor's OSHA office in Omaha and the Antelope County Sheriff's office said they have opened investigations into the death Wednesday of a subcontractor worker on a road close to a wind farm construction site near Elgin. (http://journalstar.com/business/agriculture/employee-killed-near-wind-farm-construction-site/article_1c26857a-1cbc-5165-bf1b-ab1446f4a58b.html).

[Rural mail carrier survey shows 'good' overwinter survival of species](#). All wildlife species surveyed during the 2015 April Rural Mail Carrier Survey appear to have a good overwinter survival heading into breeding season, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission reported. Those species also appeared to have rebounded from the severe winter of 2009-2010 and the drought of 2012-2013, the agency said. Pheasant, bobwhite, prairie grouse, wild turkey, cottontail and jackrabbit were the species surveyed. (http://journalstar.com/sports/rural-mail-carrier-survey-shows-good-overwinter-survival-of-species/article_70ae555c-4269-5d5a-9730-1ddd1fa28900.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>).

Around the Nation & World...

Wind and Wildlife

[Preliminary Wind Energy Impacts Assessment Methodology Released](#). USGS has released a [preliminary methodology](#) to assess the population level impacts of onshore wind energy development on birds and bats. This wind energy impacts assessment methodology is the first of its kind, evaluating national to regional scale impacts of those bats and birds that breed in and migrate through the United States. The methodology focuses primarily on the effects of collisions between wildlife and turbines. (<http://www.usgs.gov/newsroom/article.asp?ID=4223#.VWzBUs-rRpg>).

[Preliminary Methodology to Assess the National and Regional Impact of U.S. Wind Energy Development on Birds and Bats](#), Diffendorfer et al. 2015. The U.S. Geological Survey has developed a methodology to assess the impacts of wind energy development on wildlife; it is a probabilistic, quantitative assessment methodology that can communicate to decision makers and the public the magnitude of these effects on species populations. (<http://pubs.usgs.gov/sir/2015/5066/>).

[Making Wind Turbines Bat-Proof: Researchers to Create 3D Printed Echolocation Whistles](#). Now, biologists at [Texas A&M University](#) are collaborating with scientists at the [University of Massachusetts Amherst](#) to save the bats from wind turbine danger; not only that, they have federal funding to back a project which involves dealing with the use of ultrasonics for the bats, since even though they are not blind, they can't see well in the dark, and they rely on their specialized and heightened sense of echolocation. Before anyone installs the devices, the researchers will be testing them in their lab first. (<http://3dprint.com/68826/bat-whistles-for-wind-turbines/>).

[Wind farms threaten seal hearing](#). In recent years research has sounded an ever-louder alarm about the effects of noise from industry, boating, and military activities on marine mammals. One source of this noise is pile driving during construction of offshore wind farms. Scientists have feared that this activity could particularly affect seals which, like wind farms, tend to cluster around offshore sand banks. Study results indicate all of the seals were exposed to noise levels thought sufficient to cause temporary hearing impairment. Twelve of the 24 seals were exposed to noise levels above the threshold for permanent hearing damage at least once and, in some cases, up to 9 times over the course of the study period. (<http://conservationmagazine.org/2015/05/wind-farms-threaten-seal-hearing/>).

[Sound exposure in harbour seals during the installation of an offshore wind farm: predictions of auditory damage](#), Hastie et al. 2015, Journal of Applied Ecology. (<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1365-2664.12403/abstract>).

[Energy Sprawl: Comparing biodiversity impacts of oil, gas and wind production](#). Energy has become a contentious and politicized topic, spurring activism, whether it be the fossil fuel divestment campaign, Keystone pipeline protests, or concern over wind turbine harm to birds. But whatever energy future we choose, two things are clear: an expanding human population will need more energy, and no matter what energy source we pick, it will have landscape-scale impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services. (<http://news.mongabay.com/2015/0508-farber-energy-impacts.html>).

[The Energy Footprint: How Oil, Natural Gas, and Wind Energy Affect Land for Biodiversity and the Flow of Ecosystem Services](#), Jones et al. 2015, BioScience. Given the projected increases in oil, gas, and wind energy development, we synthesize and compare known impacts on wildlife mortality, habitat loss, fragmentation, noise and light pollution, invasive species, and changes in carbon stock and water resources. The literature on these impacts is unevenly distributed among energy types, geographic regions, and taxonomic groups. Therefore, we suggest priorities for research and practice, including using a landscape approach to predict and plan for the cumulative effects of development. Understanding the full consequences of energy production is necessary for meeting demand while also safeguarding the ecological systems on which we depend. (<http://bioscience.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2015/01/22/biosci.biu224>).

[Responses of male Greater Prairie-Chickens to wind energy development](#), Winder et al. 2015, The Condor. The authors looked at the behavioral avoidance of male Greater Prairie-chickens to wind turbines lek persistence and male lek attendance and male body mass. (<http://www.bioone.org/doi/10.1650/CONDOR-14-98.1>).

[Eagle Kills a Controversial Consequence of America's Rush to Wind Energy](#). For the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in particular, the president's order presented a troubling dilemma: an obligation to support the growth of the wind energy companies and issue them permits, while at the same time protecting our national bird from harm. (<http://www.theepochtimes.com/n3/1338834-more-eagle-deaths-imminent-in-rush-to-cool-the-planet-with-wind-energy/>).

[Opinion: If wind turbines are taller, more birds will pay the price](#). A new report this month from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service calls into question the wind industry's assertion that birds fly well above wind turbines' rotor blades. Using radar, researchers examined fall migration at two locations in Michigan. They found that the greatest density of birds and bats migrating at night occurred from 300 feet to 500 feet above ground. That's almost directly at hub height for the new generation of giant turbines. (http://www.nj.com/opinion/index.ssf/2015/05/opinion_if_wind_turbines_are_taller_more_birds_wil.html).

[Advocacy group: Wind turbine rules needed to protect birds](#). A new analysis by the American Bird Conservancy said more than 30,000 of the existing 48,000 turbines are in places that government agencies or nonprofit organizations such as the National Audubon Society describe as having special significance to birds. (http://www.bostonherald.com/business/business_markets/2015/05/advocacy_group_wind_turbine_rules_needed_to_protect_birds).

Policy

[USFWS to Evaluate New Incidental Take Permitting Program Under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act](#). Today, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service ("Service") published [notice](#) in the Federal Register announcing that it intends to prepare a programmatic environmental impact statement to evaluate the effects of a program that would authorize incidental take under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act ("MBTA"). Through this rulemaking, the Service will evaluate various approaches to regulating incidental take of migratory birds, including: general conditional authorizations, individual permits, voluntary guidance for industry sector. (<http://www.lawofrenewableenergy.com/2015/05/articles/regulation/usfws-to-evaluate-new-incidental-take-permitting-program-under-the-migratory-bird-treaty-act/>).

[New Wine In An Old Bottle? Inside The Feds' MBTA Incidental Take Proposal](#). On May 26, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) initiated an environmental review of a proposed permitting program for authorizing the incidental "take" of migratory birds protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). (http://www.nawindpower.com/e107_plugins/content/content.php?content.14266).

[House Republicans Vote to Strip Endangered Species Act Protections From Two Species Based on Fraudulent Claims About Military Readiness](#). In a partisan vote, the U.S. House of Representatives approved an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act today to end all

federal protections for the American burying beetle and lesser prairie chicken under the Endangered Species Act. Despite the fact that the current range of the lesser prairie chicken does not overlap with any U.S. military bases, and the Defense Department has been a partner in conserving the American burying beetle since 1989, Tea Party Republicans assert, with no supporting evidence, that these species interfere with military readiness and must be delisted. This must-pass legislation now moves to the Senate for further consideration. (http://www.biologicaldiversity.org/news/press_releases/2015/american-burying-beetle-lesser-prairie-chicken-05-15-2015.html).

[Federal sage-grouse conservation plans unveiled for Western public lands](#). Wyoming Gov. Matt Mead, co-chair of the Sage-Grouse Task Force, joined Interior Secretary Sally Jewell on Thursday (May 28) for the announcement of a milestone in the state-federal partnership to protect Western sagebrush habitat. At an event in Cheyenne, Wyo., Secretary Jewell unveiled final environmental reviews for proposed land use plans that will help conserve greater sage-grouse habitat and support sustainable economic development on public lands in 10 western states. (<http://westgov.org/news/340-news-2015/970-federal-sage-grouse-conservation-plans-unveiled-for-western-public-lands>).

[BLM, USFS Plans for Western Public Lands Provide for Greater Sage-Grouse Protection, Balanced Development](#). The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) today released final environmental reviews for proposed land use plans that will help conserve greater sage-grouse habitat and support sustainable economic development on portions of public lands in 10 states across the West. The land management plans, developed during the past three years in partnership with the states and with input from local partners, will benefit wildlife, outdoor recreation, ranching and other traditional land uses that rely on a healthy sagebrush landscape. (<http://www.doi.gov/news/pressreleases/blm-and-usfs-plans-for-western-public-lands-provide-for-greater-sage-grouse-protection-and-balanced-development.cfm>).

Wildlife & Habitats

[Common Bacterium Helps Bats With White-nose Syndrome](#). A common bacterium we find in everyday things, like food flavorings, is giving scientists hope that bat populations can be saved from deadly White-nose Syndrome. The new treatment was developed in Missouri by Forest Service scientists Sybill Amelon and Dan Lindner, and Chris Cornelison of Georgia State University. The bacterium, *Rhodococcus rhodochrous*, dwells in pretty much all soils found in North America and is safe for plants and animals. In fact, it's been used in more than one industrial application, including flavorings for our food, for over half a century, according to the U.S. Forest Service. (<http://news.discovery.com/animals/common-bacterium-cures-bats-white-nose-syndrome-150515.htm>).

[U.S. Forest Service Research Team Releases Bats Treated for WNS](#). USDA Forest Service scientists, collaborators, and supporters gathered at Mark Twain Cave Complex in Hannibal, Mo., on Tuesday evening to express cautious optimism about a possible treatment for [White-nose Syndrome](#) (WNS). The purpose of the gathering was to release bats that had WNS last fall but were successfully treated during a field trial over the past winter. (<http://www.nrs.fs.fed.us/news/release/wns-treated-bats-released>).

[Isolated wetlands have significant impact on water quality](#). Geographically isolated wetlands play an outsized role in providing clean water and other environmental benefits even though they may lack the regulatory protections of other wetlands, according to a new article. (<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2015/02/150225132257.htm>).

[Geographically Isolated Wetlands are Important Biogeochemical Reactors on the Landscape](#), Marton et al. 2015, BioScience. Given the likelihood that any geographically isolated wetlands (GIW) contributes to downstream water quality, we suggest that the burden of proof could be shifted to assuming that all GIWs are critical for protecting aquatic systems until proven otherwise. (<http://bioscience.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2015/02/23/biosci.biv009.abstract>).

[The Sagebrush Sea \(video\)](https://vimeo.com/122049831). Check out the trailer of the movie made by Cornell University. (<https://vimeo.com/122049831>).

[Study: Sage grouse likely to go extinct in Powder River Basin within three decades](http://trib.com/business/energy/study-sage-grouse-likely-to-go-extinct-in-powder-river/article_7a2db73c-7166-504b-8501-1f781167beaf.html). Sage grouse will likely go extinct in the Powder River Basin within the next three decades, according to a recent study commissioned by the Pew Charitable Trusts. Those declines mirror wider trends across the bird's range. The study found sage grouse populations across the West declined by 56 percent between 2007 and 2013. The Wyoming Basin, home to the world's largest sage grouse population, dropped from 50,000 male grouse in 2007 to 20,000 in 2013. (http://trib.com/business/energy/study-sage-grouse-likely-to-go-extinct-in-powder-river/article_7a2db73c-7166-504b-8501-1f781167beaf.html).

[Create Habitat for Monarchs](http://www.monarchjointventure.org/get-involved/create-habitat-for-monarchs/). Monarchs cannot survive without milkweed; their caterpillars only eat milkweed plants (*Asclepias spp.*), and monarch butterflies need milkweed to lay their eggs. With shifting land management practices, we have lost much milkweed from the landscape. (<http://www.monarchjointventure.org/get-involved/create-habitat-for-monarchs/>).

[Governor Cuomo Announces Lights Out New York Initiative to Protect Migratory Birds](https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-lights-out-new-york-initiative-protect-migratory-birds). Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced that state buildings will participate in the New York State Lights Out Initiative, joining the Audubon Society in the charge to reduce sources of light pollution that disrupt and disorient birds during migration. State-owned and managed buildings will turn off non-essential outdoor lighting from 11:00 p.m. to dawn during the times of peak bird migration: from April 15 through May 31 and August 15 through November 15. The Governor also launched the new I Love NY Birding website, which will provide visitors with information on bird watching and how to participate in the Lights Out initiative, among other tools. (<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-lights-out-new-york-initiative-protect-migratory-birds>).

Wind

[Enabling Wind Power Nationwide](http://energy.gov/eere/wind/downloads/enabling-wind-power-nationwide). This report shows how the United States can unlock the vast potential for wind energy deployment in all 50 states—made possible through the next-generation of larger wind turbines. It highlights wind energy's potential to generate electricity even in states with no utility-scale wind energy development today. (<http://energy.gov/eere/wind/downloads/enabling-wind-power-nationwide>).

[Larger wind turbines can lead to 50% more deployment — DOE report](http://www.governorswindenergycoalition.org/?p=13082). The United States could increase its wind power deployment by more than 50 percent with larger components, but the outsized technology would also boost potential problems with transportation and wildlife deaths, according to a new report from the Energy Department. (<http://www.governorswindenergycoalition.org/?p=13082>).

[Hawaii Proposes 100 Percent Renewable Energy by 2045](http://www.govtech.com/fs/Hawaii-Proposes-100-Percent-Renewable-Energy-by-2045.html). Hawaii House Bill 623 passed by a 74-2 vote, and if Gov. David Ige signs the bill into law, Hawaii will become the first U.S. state to make a total commitment to renewable energy sources. Hawaii's energy today is composed of 80 percent fossil fuel sources, and some projections say a target of 40 percent renewable energy in Hawaii would be possible by 2030. (<http://www.govtech.com/fs/Hawaii-Proposes-100-Percent-Renewable-Energy-by-2045.html>).

Solar

[World's First 'Solar Road' Is Generating Even More Power Than Expected](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/05/13/solar-road-power_n_7275278.html). An experimental bike path that also functions as a giant solar cell has far exceeded expectations in the six months it's been in use -- and that has scientists eyeing roadways as possible sources of solar energy to power street lights, traffic systems, and [electric cars](#). (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/05/13/solar-road-power_n_7275278.html).

Other

[Clean Water Rule Protects Streams and Wetlands Critical to Public Health, Communities, and Economy](#). In an historic step for the protection of clean water, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Army finalized the Clean Water Rule today to clearly protect from pollution and degradation the streams and wetlands that form the foundation of the nation's water resources. The rule ensures that waters protected under the Clean Water Act are more precisely defined and predictably determined, making permitting less costly, easier, and faster for businesses and industry. The rule is grounded in law and the latest science, and is shaped by public input. The rule does not create any new permitting requirements for agriculture and maintains all previous exemptions and exclusions. (<http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/0/62295CDDD6C6B45685257E52004FAC97>).

[Carbon dioxide levels reach global milestone](#). Worldwide levels of carbon dioxide — the gas scientists say is most responsible for global warming — reached a significant milestone for the month of March, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said Wednesday. The global monthly average for carbon dioxide hit 400.83 parts per million in March, the first time the average surpassed 400 ppm for an entire month since such measurements began in the late 1950s, NOAA said. (<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2015/05/06/carbon-dioxide-global-warming-climate-change/70881210/>).

[E.P.A. Carbon Emissions Plan Could Save Thousands of Lives, Study Finds](#). New carbon emissions standards that were proposed last year for coal-fired power plants in the United States would substantially improve human health and prevent more than 3,000 premature deaths per year, according to a new study. (http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/05/health/epa-emissions-plan-will-save-thousands-of-lives-study-finds.html?_r=1).

[Inside the war on coal](#). The war on coal is not just political rhetoric, or a paranoid fantasy concocted by rapacious polluters. It's real and it's relentless. Over the past five years, it has killed a coal-fired power plant every 10 days. It has quietly transformed the U.S. electric grid and the global climate debate. (<http://www.politico.com/agenda/story/2015/05/inside-war-on-coal-000002>).

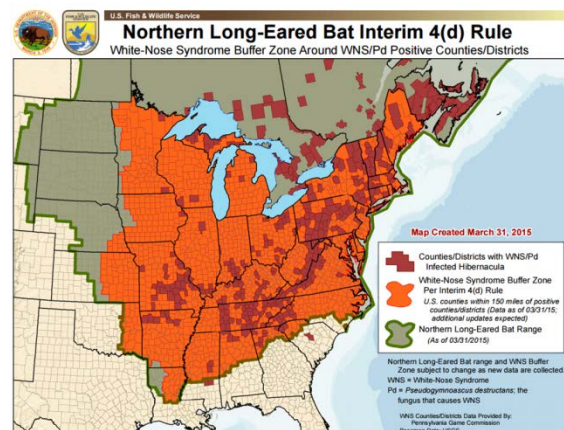
[What Climate Change Sounds Like from the Amazon to the Arctic](#). In 2013, the composition [A Song of Our Warming Planet](#) transformed 133 years of global temperature measurements into a haunting melody for the cello. Following its release, *A Song of Our Warming Planet* was featured by [The New York Times](#), [Slate](#), the [Weather Channel](#), [National Public Radio](#), [io9](#), [The Huffington Post](#) and many others on its way to becoming a viral sensation and reaching audiences around the globe. (<http://ensia.com/videos/what-climate-change-sounds-like-from-the-amazon-to-the-arctic/>).

[California Joins 12-State Climate Change Agreement Ahead Of 2015 UN Conference In Paris](#). California has joined a pact with 11 other states and countries to slash greenhouse gas emissions and tackle climate change. Gov. Jerry Brown signed an agreement Tuesday as part of a broader effort to pressure global leaders to adopt an aggressive emissions treaty at a United Nations-led summit in Paris later this year. (<http://www.ibtimes.com/california-joins-12-state-climate-change-agreement-ahead-2015-un-conference-paris-1930018>).

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>).

[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](#)

[Siting and Permitting for Transmission and Renewable Energy Projects](#) will be held in San Diego, CA on July 16-17, 2015.

(<http://www.euci.com/events/index.php?ci=2685&p=10040#22369x652122Ru0109>).

[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>).

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; **Approved by the Governor on May 26, 2015.** 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 were proposed May 4 & 5, 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; **Approved by the Governor on May 27, 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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