

Wind Power State Summit

Abby Arnold, AWWI Executive Director

WINDPOWER 2011

May 26, 2011



What is State of Wind/Wildlife



- Is there a problem?
- Challenges are Real
- Siting barriers cause uncertainty
 - Ambiguity in federal policy
 - Insufficient use of good science
 - Onerous hurdles to obtain permits
 - Lack of trust



National Policy in Development



- US FWS developing guidelines
 - Wind Turbine Guidelines
 - Guidance, implementing rules associated with Bald and Golden Eagle Guidance
 - Drafts for both issued in February for public comment (deadline May 19)
 - Uncertain what will be modified.



Land Based Draft Wind Guidelines



- FAC recommended set of guidelines, 3/10
 - Recommended a risk based approach to siting, increasing level of study & analysis based on level of risk at each site
 - Use of peer review science
 - Written for variety of parties involved in siting issues (FWS, developers, states, NGOs)



Goals of Siting Guidelines



- Reduced ecological impacts
- Increased compliance and reduced regulatory risk
- Improved predictability of wildlife and habitat impacts
- Cost effective

For Guidelines to be effective, compliance matters!



Draft Guidelines: Key Issues

(Analysis of Dr. Allison, not necessarily view of all AWWI Partners)



- Propose data collection regardless of level of uncertainty or availability of existing information
- Subvert premise of a risk-based assessment framework
 - Not data-driven or scientifically rigorous
 - Risk assessment approach presents a series of hurdles to be overcome – all tiers required
- Lack scientific rigor, and are unclear, contradictory, and ambiguous



Eagle Guidance



- FWS draft guidance
 - Based on Rule(BGEPA) published in 2009
 - requires development of conservation practices – *no net loss*
 - permit duration 5 years
 - retroactive to all wind projects
 - requires mitigation if take occurs
 - Onsite
 - Offsite compensatory mitigation



What Is Known About Raptors and Wind Energy



- With the exception of the Altamont Pass in northern California, for sites where we have data, raptor fatalities are low at most wind facilities across the U.S.
- A population-level impact of bird and raptor fatalities has not been demonstrated, even in the Altamont Pass, although data are still lacking for many operating wind facilities



What is Needed ?



- Policies and guidelines grounded in science
 - Better information on what is known,
 - Better tools and credible mitigation strategies
- Getting right parties to the table to foster collaboration and trust



AWWI's Purpose

A unique collaboration of wind industry, nonprofit, and state agency leaders, joined in a shared mission:

To facilitate timely and responsible development of wind energy while protecting wildlife and wildlife habitat





AWWI Sustaining Partners and Friends



AES Wind Generation
American Wind Energy Association
Assoc. of Fish & Wildlife Agencies
BP Wind Energy
Clean Line Energy Partners
Environmental Defense Fund
enXco
First Wind
GE Energy
Horizon Wind Energy
Iberdrola Renewables
National Audubon Society
National Wildlife Federation

Natural Resources Defense Council
NextEra Energy Resources
NRG Systems, Inc.
Pacific Gas & Electric Co.
RES Americas
Ridgeline Energy
Pattern Energy Group
Shell WindEnergy Inc.
Sierra Club
The Nature Conservancy
Union of Concerned Scientists
Vestas Americas



AWWI Board of Directors



Jan Blittersdorf *Chair*

NRG Systems, Inc.

Genevieve Thompson *Vice Chair
& Treasurer*

National Audubon Society

Edward C. Lowe *Secretary*

GE Energy

Rene Braud

Horizon Wind Energy

Peter Frumhoff

Union of Concerned Scientists

Brandy Gibson

BP Wind Energy

Alan Pollom

The Nature Conservancy

Stacy Small

Environmental Defense Fund

Jeffrey Vonk

Association of Fish & Wildlife
Agencies

Johanna Wald

Natural Resources Defense Council

James Walker

enXco

Stu Webster

Iberdrola Renewables



AWWI's Vision for Change



The Power of Science:

Increased, high-quality science will reduce uncertainty and guide the best decision-making about difficult siting issues

The Power of Collaboration:

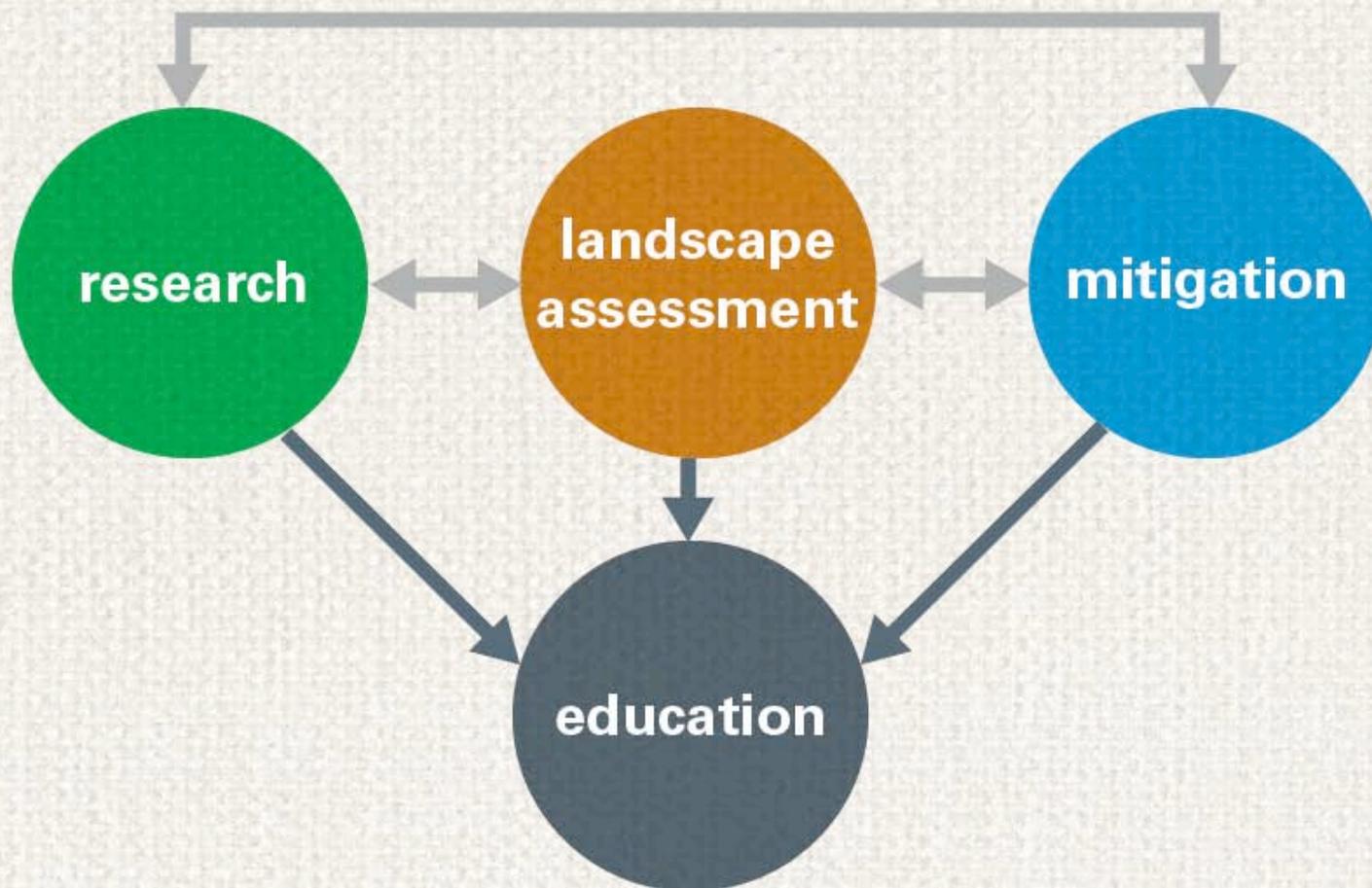
When leaders from the wind industry, environmental nonprofits, and wildlife agencies work together, there is powerful momentum for change

The most creative problem-solving happens through cross-sector collaboration among diverse, committed stakeholders





AWWI Initiatives: Integrated and Evolving





AWWI Initiatives

Landscape Assessment Tool (LAT)

Developed in partnership with The Nature Conservancy to provide preliminary wind-wildlife sensitivity screening

Assess current state of mapping tools to evaluate strengths, challenges, and gaps

Enhance functionality and improve and expand data layers encouraging consolidation of tools rather than proliferation





AWWI Initiatives



Wind-Wildlife Research Program



Establish a comprehensive peer-reviewed research agenda

Answer priority questions

Identify future challenges

Build structure that engages experts in research and evaluation



AWWI Initiatives



Wind-Wildlife Research Program cont.

Criteria for Establishing Research Program Priorities

Emphasizes near term results to inform decision-making and regulation

Applies across a broad geographic range OR addresses a critical issue

Leverages existing data (AWWI Research Information System)

Lays the groundwork to address long-term research questions

Offers distinctive AWWI role

Attracts funding from public and private sectors



AWWI Initiatives



Wind-Wildlife Research Program cont.

Identified Research Priorities (review underway)

Comprehensive, centralized database to support critical research
(Research Information System)

Golden Eagle understanding, conservation, mitigation

Other projects that meet AWWI Research Plan criteria

Timeline: Presentation to AWWI Board by July 2011 for formal approval



AWWI Initiatives

Research Information System (RIS)

Build centralized database that organizes existing wind-wildlife data

Safeguard confidentiality of proprietary information while preserving validity of technical information

Develop parameters for most effective design for user input and analysis as well as effective management





AWWI Initiatives



Research Information System (RIS) cont.

RIS Pilot – Oregon State University

RIS Task Force formed to provide guidance

- Define key questions and metrics
- Ensure data confidentiality

Collecting data to build model

- AWWI industry partner participation
- Feb. 2011 AWEA Board Resolution -- encourages wind companies to provide wildlife data for confidential aggregation within the RIS



AWWI Initiatives



Research Information System (RIS) cont.

RIS – Vision at the Landscape Level

Analysis across habitat, species, geographic & wind project types

Improved understanding of known impacts, discourage poor assumptions about impacts

Future depiction of preconstruction assessment





AWWI Initiatives



Landscape-Level Assessment with AWWI Tools (Tier 1 and 2)

RIS offers standardization

- Comprehensive data collection
- Documentation of impacts

LAT provides viewing lens

- Platform to graphically depict analysis, combining species distribution models with wind energy impacts

RIS and LAT combined

- Apply what we already know
- Evolve from 'impact' analysis to accurate predictions of project risk assessment



AWWI Initiatives



Mitigation and Compensation



Design and support mitigation projects to address unavoidable wildlife impacts

Facilitate targeted research and build technical expertise to identify new, effective mitigation measures

Determine framework for action, supporting widespread implementation in the field



AWWI Initiatives



Education and Collaboration

Become the trusted source for peer-reviewed wind-wildlife research and best practices

Improve the rate of practical application of new scientific findings in the field

Advance awareness of state-of-the-art assessment tools and other field-honed resources

Establish peer-reviewed science as basis for siting decisions and public policy debate, supporting effective collaboration among regulatory agencies, environmental nonprofits, and industry



Getting Involved in AWWI



How you can help:

Offer input, ideas, and insights to build a strong and vital collaboration

Participate in AWWI or renew your ongoing support

Provide field expertise and data for design of AWWI tools

Help get the word out about AWWI to other stakeholders and partners



Contact Us



Abby Arnold

Executive Director

Email: AArnold@awwi.org

Phone: 202-535-7800

Taber Allison, PhD.

Director of Research and Evaluation

Email: TAllison@awwi.org

Phone: 978-287-0977

