

Memorandum

May 12, 2003

To: NWCC Wildlife Workgroup

From: Abby Arnold and Rachel Permut, NWCC Staff

RE: Next Steps from the April 23 Wildlife Workgroup Strategy Session

This summarizes our meeting April 23. I hope you agree we accomplished a lot at the meeting in Denver. Thank you for your participation in person and by phone. This memo is a summary of the next steps that emerged from the meeting.

Workgroup Mission Statement

The Work group agreed to develop a mission statement. Because this workgroup has broadened its scope and is looking towards a new set of activities, A. Arnold and R. Permut will send out a draft mission statement for discussion at the May 14, 2003 Wildlife Workgroup conference call.

Ideas brainstormed at the meeting include:

- Develop, maintain, and communicate an objective understanding of the impacts of wind development on sensitive wildlife and their habitats through assisting with projects and tools that encourage responsible development
- Coordinate and facilitate outreach to promote dialog among wildlife advocates, management biologists, regulators, utilities, the wind industry and the public.
- Assist in the development of appropriate and effective mitigation measures
- Provide information that helps assure that wind is treated fairly in reference to wildlife impacts

Fish and Wildlife Service Interim Voluntary Guidelines

The Wildlife Workgroup members will begin independent review of the Region 7, Alaska, guidelines and determine which topics need further discussion and/or research. The group will email comments to one another to start a discussion. NWCC staff will work with workgroup members to schedule a Wildlife workgroup meeting where the draft guidelines available at the time will be reviewed, gaps and research needs will be identified and next steps will be agreed on. The group requests that Al Manville communicate to the USFWS the need for coordination and education among regional offices and field supervisors to ensure consistency in application of draft voluntary guidelines. Representatives from each of these offices will be invited to attend the Wildlife workgroup meeting.

Ecological Significance and Cumulative Impacts Study

As a first step, at the next Wildlife Workgroup meeting, experts in population biology, system ecologists, GIS experts, and biometricians will be invited to discuss various modeling tools, strengths and weaknesses of these tools and possible approaches that could be taken to model ecological significance and cumulative impacts of various wind

facilities in the United States. Steve Ugoretz volunteered to search for the appropriate speakers on cumulative impacts and ecological significance to invite.

Meta-analysis

The Wildlife Workgroup will draw up a scope of work for a meta-analysis study and present it to the CEC and another funding source. The goal is to produce method for predicting impacts at new sites based on standardized baseline (e.g., raptor use, raptor nesting density) and monitoring (e.g., fatality data) data collected at existing sites. This work is not intended to be used to avoid due diligence studies, but to provide a more accurate basis for prediction of impacts. Staff will work with Dick Anderson to explore funding options. The workgroup will discuss next steps for developing a scope of work on the May 14 conference call.

Mapping of Geographic Sensitive Areas

Rachel Permut will begin looking into the feasibility of overlaying wind resource data, transmission planning, sensitive habitats and sensitive species. Sources will include State Natural Heritage Inventories and organizations such as the Nature Conservancy. After receiving this information, the workgroup will decide on next steps.

Non-collision impacts

The wildlife workgroup will begin work on this project right away. They will develop a scope of work and RFP for a literature review on the non-collision impacts of wind farms. Rachel Permut will schedule a conference call following the May 14 call to coordinate volunteers to draw up the scope of work. (Non-collision impacts will include international studies of habitat fragmentation and avoidance.)

Agenda for May 14th Call

1. Edit Mission Statement
2. Determine Date for next Meeting
3. Select volunteers for SOW for non-collision impacts
4. Review CEC's role in the meta-analysis and determine next steps
5. Discuss FWS guidelines
6. Update on Mapping Feasibility
7. Gather names for possible speakers on cumulative impacts