

# Montana Wildlife & Wind Energy Virtual Workshop

## Speaker Biographies

April 27 & 29, May 4 & 6, 2021

10:00am-2:00pm MT

*Speaker biographies are ordered by session and then alphabetical by last name.*

### I. Welcome



**Paige Johnson**, Outreach and Engagement Manager, American Wind Wildlife Institute

Paige Johnson manages AWWI's outreach and communications efforts to engage with collaborators and share AWWI's research and mission. She has a decade of professional experience in science writing, editing, outreach, and communication, and in project and program management at environmental NGOs, academia, and museums. She has also conducted research studying the interface between environmental research and policymaking. Paige holds an MSc in Biodiversity, Conservation and Management from the University of Oxford, an M.S. in Science Communication from Drexel University, and a B.A. in Philosophy from Occidental College.

**Ken McDonald**, Wildlife Division Administrator, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Ken McDonald is currently the Chief of Wildlife with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, where he oversees the Wildlife Management, Wildlife Habitat, and Hunter Access programs for MFWP. He has been in this position since 2007, and worked in the Fisheries Division at MFWP from 1998-2007 with a focus primarily on native fish conservation. Prior to coming to Montana, he worked for the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources from 1990-1998 as the Furbearer Biologist and then Regional Nongame Manager. Ken received his B.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries Biology from University of California at Davis, and M.S. in Zoology from The Ohio State University

### II. Wind Energy in Montana



**Tom Darin**, Sr. Director, Western State Affairs, American Clean Power

Tom leads the renewable energy industry in the western U.S. to develop and implement state policies that increase demand for wind, solar and storage projects and the transmission buildout to bring these resources to consumers. His regional focus is on establishing a western Regional Transmission Organization. Prior to ACPA,

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Tom held a similar position with the American Wind Energy Association starting in 2011. This followed Tom's leadership as the Director of Transmission and Renewable Energy at the White House Council on Environmental Quality, where he led efforts to establish the Rapid Response Team of seven federal agencies to improve siting and permitting processes for renewable energy and transmission. At the U.S. Dept. of Energy, Tom led regional transmission planning efforts to support renewable energy. Tom was Co-Chair of the Western Governor's Renewable Energy Zone Initiative and was a member of the transmission expansion committee at Western Electricity Coordinating Council. Tom obtained his B.A. from the University of Notre Dame and J.D. from the Northern Illinois University College of Law.



**Nicole Hughes**, Executive Director, Renewable Northwest

Nicole Hughes joined Renewable Northwest as Executive Director in July 2018. She has over 16 years of experience in the renewable energy industry in areas such as project development, construction, finance, permitting and policy for utility-scale wind and solar energy. She has worked for AWS Truepower, HDR, Element Power, RES Americas, Tetra Tech, and The Bonneville Power Administration. In her previous work, Nicole engaged with Renewable Northwest as a member and understands first hand the importance of the organization's coalition work between advocacy organizations and renewable energy businesses in moving the region forward towards a clean energy future. Nicole has served in a variety of board and volunteer positions working on issues related to support for individuals with disabilities, environmental conservation and energy issues. She currently serves on the boards of the Center for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Technologies, the Renewable Hydrogen Alliance and the Center for Resource Solutions Green E Governance Board. Nicole lives in Portland, OR with her husband and two kids and spends most of her free time recreating in the mountains of the Pacific Northwest.



**Noah Long**, Director, Western Region, Climate & Clean Energy Program, Natural Resources Defense Council

For over a decade, Noah Long has worked to advance policies for deploying renewable energy, increasing energy efficiency, and advancing cleaner cars and electric vehicles. His work includes a focus on creating a fast, just, and sustainable transition to clean energy to address the climate crisis in the west. In Long's first project with NRDC, he helped initiate a successful campaign to protect the wildlife, wildlands, and communities of Chile's Patagonia from damages associated with large-scale hydrological development. Currently, Long co-directs NRDC's western clean energy and climate policy initiatives with Peter Miller. He holds a bachelor's degree from Bowdoin College, a master's in international development and environmental policy from the London School of Economics, and a J.D. from Stanford Law School. He is based in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

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### III. Wind Project Development Process & Site Selection

**Kristen Goland**, Western Region Permit Manager, Avangrid Renewables

Kristen Goland is a Senior Permit Manager leading the western portion of the United States for Avangrid Renewables. With nearly 20 years of experience in renewable energy, she has permitted complex projects spanning from Vermont to California providing expertise at the federal, state and local level. She is currently the Vice-chair of the Wind and Wildlife Research Fund.

**Sam Milodragovich**, Wildlife Biologist, Retired 2019, Formerly NorthWestern Energy

Managed wildlife interactions with NorthWestern's generation projects including wind and hydro as well as electric and natural gas transmission and distribution systems for 25 years focusing mainly on birds and bats. Member of the Avian Powerline Interaction Committee and both Montana's bald and golden eagle working groups and the first Montana sage grouse working group. Worked with USFWS, MT FWP and MSU to develop the 2002 USFWS Montana office of Ecological Service's Guidelines for Evaluating Potential Impact of Wind Resource Areas on Wildlife in Montana which became the basis for the USFWS 2003 Interim Guidelines to Avoid and Minimize Wildlife Impacts from Wind Turbines.

Worked closely with state and federal agencies and Audubon to evaluate numerous proposed wind projects in Montana and South Dakota and served on Technical Advisory Committees for Judith Gap and Spion Kop developments in Montana.



**Andrew Pinger**, Regional Environmental Senior Manager, EDP Renewables

Andrew Pinger is a Senior Regional Environmental Manager at EDP Renewables North America, where he has served since 2014. With EDPR he has worked on pre-construction and operational phase wildlife studies for wind projects in Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Alberta, and Ontario. Prior to joining EDP Renewables, he was a biologist for Western EcoSystems Technology where he acted as a bio-monitor at operational wind farms - scanning for birds and ordering turbine curtailments to protect eagles and condors. He earned his Masters degree in Biology from Portland State University in 2013.

### IV. Wind Permitting in Montana to Site and Operate

**Craig Jones**, Major Facility Siting Act, Montana Department of Environmental Quality

Craig Jones is the Major Facility Siting Act (MFSa) Coordinator for the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Craig has worked in the MFSa Program for 15 years and has experience permitting major linear facilities in Montana. He is a lifelong Montanan and attended Carroll College in Helena, MT.

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**Renee Lemon**, Land Use Planner, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Renee is a land use planner for Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. She specializes in planning communities, energy systems, and transportation networks in a way that reduces impacts on natural resources. She has over 20 years of experience working for all levels of government, the private sector, and non-profit organizations. Renee is a certified planner with the American Institute of Certified Planners, has a B.S. in Earth Sciences from Montana State University, and anticipates completing a Master of Public Administration degree from the University of Montana in 2021.



**Kyla Maki**, Energy Resource Professional, Montana Department of Environmental Quality

Kyla Maki is an Energy Resource Professional in the Energy Office at the Montana Department of Environmental Quality. She has been with DEQ for five years and in this role focuses on renewable energy and fuel planning and policy. Prior to coming to DEQ, Kyla worked in the nonprofit sector on energy policy and advocacy. Kyla has a B.S. in wildlife biology and political science from the University of Montana.



**Forrest Mandeville**, Owner/Planner, Forrest Mandeville Consulting

Forrest Mandeville, AICP, was born and raised in Columbus, MT. He has worked in the planning profession in Montana since 2007 when he was hired to work in the Stillwater County Planning Department. Since that time Forrest’s career has taken him from the public to the private sector. Forrest currently provides on-call planning services to a couple of counties in Montana and works on a variety of private planning projects. Forrest also served three terms in the Montana State House of Representatives where he worked on numerous land-use bills.



**Maya Rao**, MPDES Permit Writer, Montana Department of Environmental Quality

Maya Rao is a water quality permit writer for the Montana Department of Environmental Quality’s (DEQ) MPDES Section where she writes individual permits and specializes in the Stormwater Construction and Construction Dewatering General Permits. She appreciates that her position places her at the nexus of interpreting science, interacting with stakeholders, and understanding law. Maya holds Master of Science in

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Environmental Science and Master of Public Affairs degrees from Indiana University. In her free time, Maya enjoys exploring the outdoors, cooking, and teaching her cat new tricks.



**Jean Riley**, Transportation Planning Engineer, Montana Department of Transportation

Jean has a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering Degree from Montana State University and a Master of Arts Degree in Policy, Operations, and Logistics. She has worked in many areas both public and private from coal mining, environmental cleanup and presently in transportation. She works within the Montana Department of Transportation Policy Analysis Team in the Rail, Transit and Planning Division as the Transportation Engineer. This Team is responsible for coordinating review of developments or other's projects that may substantially and permanently impact Montana's transportation system. The coordinated reviews determine the level of impacts and the types of mitigation required prior to allowing the projects or developments impacts to maintain the safety and function of the roadway.



**Cory Shaw**, Property Management Section Supervisor, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

The Property Management Section manages DNRC Cabin Site (residential) Leasing, Commercial Leasing, Renewables Leasing, Land Use Licensing, Authorizations and Navigable Waters for the State of Montana School Trust Lands. Cory has experience in Property Management, Marketing, Retail Operations, and Commercial Development and has strong and diverse background in commercial real estate marketing and lease management. She also has an established history in business consulting and development with expertise in conducting workflow analysis, efficiency assessments and strategic planning. Cory brings an entrepreneurial perspective to the management real estate programs balanced with a well-grounded appreciation for agency policies and procedures. Cory holds a B.S. in Business Management.



**Carolyn Sime**, Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program Manager, MT Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

Carolyn Sime is the Program Manager for the Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program. She leads implementation of Montana's Sage Grouse Conservation Strategy, under the direction of the Office of the Governor, the Montana Sage Grouse Oversight Team and the Montana Dept. of Natural Resources and Conservation. The Program was launched in 2015. Prior to this, she worked as a wildlife biologist and program coordinator at Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks from 1994 to 2011. She holds a B.S. degree in biology and an M.S. degree in fish and wildlife Management from Montana State

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University. In 2014, she earned her J.D. from the University of Montana School of Law and is also a licensed attorney.



**Judd Stark**, Project Manager, Catena Consulting

Judd Stark has over 20 years of experience conducting environmental studies, developing environmental permits and evaluating impacts to natural resources for a variety of industries. He has worked in the wind industry since 2005 and is knowledgeable of environmental issues facing development. As a principal and project manager for Catena Consulting in Billings, Montana, his primary responsibilities include advising clients on siting and permitting strategies, coordinating environmental studies and permitting processes, preparing technical reports, coordinating with state and federal agencies and analyzing project effects on environmental resources. He has also been involved in development of Environmental Assessments (EAs) and Environmental Impact Statements (EISs). Mr. Stark's most extensive experience in support of wind energy projects pertains to facility siting and wildlife studies to address USFWS guidance and eagle incidental take permit regulations.

#### V. Siting Wind and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Wind Energy Guidelines



**Allison Begley**, Avian Conservation Biologist, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks

Allison Begley is the Avian Conservation Specialist for Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. She has been working with the Department since 2003 and has been actively involved in conversations about wind and wildlife throughout that time. She has been on the Judith Gap and Spion Kop Technical Advisory Committees. She received her BSc from the University of Manitoba, and her MSc from the University of Alberta. When not working, she spends time with her husband, two kids, and huge dog, kayaking, skiing, biking or whatever else they decide they should try.

#### **Jeff Berglund**, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Jeff: A Montana resident since 1992, Jeff joined the Fish and Wildlife Service in Helena, Montana as a Fish and Wildlife Biologist in 2011. He manages projects occurring primarily east of the Continental Divide and is responsible for Federal Activities / Conservation Planning Assistance; Section 7 / Section 10 Endangered Species Act consultation activities, Clean Water Act Section 404 permit review; Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act activities; and serves as a primary FWS greater sage-grouse and wind energy project contact for Montana. His previous work experience includes biologist positions with the U.S. Forest Service and State of Montana, and over 15 years as a consulting wildlife biologist in the private sector, where he conducted extensive wildlife surveys, ESA Section 7

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Biological Assessments, wetland delineation, functional assessment, mitigation, and monitoring, and developed the Montana Wetland Assessment Method (MWAM).



**Erin Lieberman**, Vice President, Environmental Compliance & Strategy, Invenergy

Erin Lieberman leads Invenergy's Environmental Compliance & Strategy team and has overseen the environmental diligence of more than 8,500 megawatts of solar and wind development and 10,500 megawatts of operational compliance. Previously, Lieberman worked for a national environmental non-profit on federal energy policy and project siting.

#### **Jake Martin**, Assistant Field Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Jake Martin is currently the Assistant Field Supervisor in the Montana Ecological Services Office in Helena; he has been in that position since November of 2019. He oversees our team that works on Federal Projects, Migratory Birds, and Environmental Contaminants. He has 19 years of Federal experience as a fish and wildlife biologist with the USFWS and NPS. In addition to his time in Montana, he has worked on sensitive species and land management projects in coastal California, the Sierra Nevadas, Great Basin, and Chihuahuan Desert.

#### VI. Overview: Wind Energy Impacts to Wildlife: State of the Science, Research Priorities, and Solutions



**Ryan Butryn**, American Wind Wildlife Information Center Manager, American Wind and Wildlife Institute

Ryan Butryn manages the American Wind Wildlife Information Center (AWWIC). He works with industry partners and friends to get their data contributions accurately and securely housed in the database. He also works closely with researchers to prepare AWWIC data for scientific analysis. Previously, Ryan has worked for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, the Vermont Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research Unit, and the U.S. Geological Survey Great Lakes Science Center supporting ecological research with his skills in geographic information systems and data analysis. He has a M.S. degree in Natural Resources from the University of Vermont Rubenstein School for Environment and Natural Resources and a B.S. degree in Environmental Biology from the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry.

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**Dr. John Lloyd**, Associate Director of Research, American Wind and Wildlife Institute

John Lloyd is a wildlife biologist. Prior to joining AWWI, John was the inaugural Director of Science at the Vermont Center for Ecostudies, where he led the organization's efforts to develop science-based solutions to pressing problems in wildlife conservation. He has worked throughout the world for a variety of conservation organizations and has taught courses in biostatistics and conservation science at Antioch University and Middlebury College. He is an Elective Member of the American Ornithological Society. John holds a Ph.D. in Wildlife Biology from the University of Montana, an M.S. in Wildlife Ecology from the University of Arizona, and a B.S. in Wildlife Biology from the University of Vermont.

## VII. Key Species/Taxa: Impacts, Minimization, Compensation

### **Dan Bachen**, Senior Zoologist, Montana Natural Heritage Program

Dan Bachen is the Senior Zoologist for the Montana Natural Heritage Program based in Helena. His work includes collecting, aggregating, and distributing information on the state's wildlife species. In recent years much of this work has focused on bats due to a general lack of information about these species and concerns about impacts of White-Nose Syndrome and wind energy development. He has been involved in efforts to determine species range, conservation status, and species trends using both acoustic and direct capture and acoustic methods.



**Kevin Kritz**, Wildlife Biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Mountain Prairie Region, Migratory Bird Management Office

Kevin is a wildlife biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Region 6, Migratory Bird Management Office (MBMO) in Lakewood, CO and has been in this position since 2007. In this role he serves as the lead for Region 6 MBMO for eagle/raptor biology, conservation, and management. He has been extensively involved with eagle incidental take permitting for many wind energy projects in Region 6 states. This has included assisting permit applicants with the development of Eagle Conservation Plans and Bird and Bat Conservation Strategies for wind projects. Also, he has authored or co-authored USFWS, Region 6 guidance memos for wind energy projects. More broadly he serves as lead for impacts to migratory birds and their habitats resulting from energy development (both renewable and non-renewable energy) and energy related infrastructure development (power lines, pipelines, etc.). And he has assisted project proponents in various industries in developing migratory bird conservation plans. He began working for the USFWS in 2001 as a biologist with the Ecological Services Office in Reno, NV. Prior to working for USFWS he was employed as a wildlife biologist with the Bureau of Land Management in the Coos Bay District Office for about ten years. Kevin has both a B.S. and M.S. degree in wildlife.

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**Chad LeBeau**, Research Biologist, Western EcoSystems Technology, Inc.

Chad LeBeau is a research biologist with WEST, Inc. in Laramie Wyoming where he designs, implements, and analyzes wildlife research studies throughout the U.S. His research focuses on sage-grouse and prairie grouse ecology but has studied numerous other species. His current research includes evaluating effects of a wind energy facility on lesser prairie-chicken, sharp-tailed grouse, and greater sage-grouse populations.



**Marco Restani**, Energy Biologist, NorthWestern Energy

Marco Restani is a Wildlife Biologist at NorthWestern Energy where his primary responsibility is to develop and implement the company's Avian Protection Program. He has studied raptors in Montana for over 30 years, specializing in eagles and ospreys. He is former Professor of Wildlife Ecology at St. Cloud State University, a Certified Wildlife Biologist, and Elective Member of the American Ornithologists' Union. He holds a BS from the University of Montana, MS from Montana State University, and PhD from Utah State University.



**Jill Shaffer**, Ecologist, U.S. Geological Survey, Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center

Jill Shaffer is an Ecologist at the U.S. Geological Survey's Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center in Jamestown, North Dakota, where she has worked on issues concerning grassland bird ecology and conservation for nearly 25 years. Her most pivotal research is on the impact of wind facilities on grassland bird distributions.



**Paul Sherman**, Mitigation Market Sector Lead, Burns & McDonnell

Paul leads the Burns & McDonnell National Mitigation Bank Acquisition & Planning effort and is responsible for project acquisition and coordinating large-scale restoration efforts. Paul leads the development of financial underwriting requirements, regional market and project specific proformas for internal and investor use; property identification, negotiation and acquisition; project budget and timeline oversight; land use entitlements; environmental liability resolution and identifying and resolving property rights issues. In the past five years alone, Paul has successfully managed over \$22 million in complex acquisition, local land use entitlement and construction projects to achieve a range of terrestrial and aquatic restoration objectives, creating a book value of over \$85 million. Paul has

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spearheaded various mitigation and conservation efforts in California, Oregon, Washington, Colorado, Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota and Illinois.

#### **Kristina Smucker**, Nongame Bureau Chief, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks

Kristina Smucker is the Nongame Bureau Chief for Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and coordinates the team responsible for the management and conservation of nongame wildlife in Montana. She has worked in the department's Nongame Program for 7 years, and during her time as a Wildlife Biologist she had the unique opportunity to supervise the development and implementation of a post-construction monitoring plan at the Spion Kop Wind Energy Facility near Geysers, Montana. Because of this experience, she has an interest in finding ways to minimize the impacts of wind energy development on wildlife.



#### **Kari Soltau**, ESA Certified Ecologist, Burns & McDonnell

Kari is an ESA Certified Ecologist with over 10 years of experience providing protected species permitting support, from conducting targeted habitat assessments and rare species surveys to developing and managing conservation plans and avian protection plans. Kari is the technical lead of the Eagle Protection and Offset Program (EPOP) in which she lends her avian risk and conservation experience to bridge the connection between utility infrastructure sponsors, permittees, and the USFWS to execute compensatory mitigation requirements.

### VIII. Looking to the Future

#### **Bryan Bedrosian**, Conservation Director, Teton Raptor Center

Bryan Bedrosian is a leading raptor researcher in the Intermountain West and has been investigating eagles, hawks, owls, and corvids in the region since 2001. His current work involves many on-going projects on spatial ecology, habitat use, bioacoustics, genetics, and management-based science. Bryan also works to advance the hardware used for wildlife research and has developed several new wildlife traps, GPS tracking transmitters, and automated recording systems. Bryan has been a leader in raptor research, tracking, transmitter attachment, and trapping. Bryan has been president of the Wyoming Chapter of The Wildlife Society and is co-chair of the Wyoming Golden Eagle Working Group. He has aided and worked with many researchers and projects across North America and Europe and believes that collaborations are the key to successful wildlife science and conservation. Bryan has been studying wintering golden eagles in eastern Montana since 2014, breeding eagles in south-central Montana since 2010, and migratory goldens through the lower 48 since 2008 with many collaborators. His current projects include modeling seasonal habitat use of golden eagles across Wyoming and Montana and spatially prioritizing the landscape for the species, as a whole, and based on multi-species values.

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**Mona Khalil**, Energy & Wildlife Program Specialist, US Geological Survey, Energy and Wildlife Research Program

Mona Khalil leads the Energy and Wildlife Research Program for the Ecosystems Mission Area at the U.S. Geological Survey. At the USGS, she coordinates national science efforts focused on the development of tools and solutions designed to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts of energy infrastructure on fish and wildlife and their

habitats.



**Paul Rabie**, Ph.D, Research Biometrician, Western EcoSystems Technology, Inc.

Paul Rabie is a research statistician based in WEST’s Laramie, Wyoming, office, where he currently works on a variety of wind-wildlife projects, including post-construction monitoring design and estimating fatality rates, including for rare species that may not be detected during carcass searches. Additionally, Paul works on the development of smart curtailment algorithms for bats, including algorithms that are

informed by local weather conditions, regional weather conditions, and daily counts of bats entering and exiting a roost cave. Paul has worked with industry and government agencies to develop methods to estimate impacts to wildlife populations due to renewable energy facilities (wind and solar energy). He has considerable experience with quantitative ecological modeling, including population dynamics, ecological community analysis, animal resource selection, and network analysis of plant-pollinator communities.

## IX. NorthWestern Energy on the Future of Wind Development in Montana



**John Hines**, VP of Supply and MT Government Affairs, NorthWestern Energy

In this position Hines is responsible for natural gas and electricity supply planning, acquisition, trading, generation development, and regulatory supply filings. In 2012 the environmental responsibility was included in the Supply function. NorthWestern provides electricity and natural gas service in Montana and South Dakota and natural gas service in Nebraska. Hines joined NorthWestern Energy in 2005 as Director,

Energy Supply Planning, and was responsible for leading the company’s energy supply planning and long-term procurement activities. In 2008 he served as Chief Energy Supply Officer with direct oversight of natural gas and electricity service. Prior to joining NorthWestern, Hines was appointed to serve as one of Montana’s two representatives to the Northwest Power and Conservation Council from 2002 through 2004. Hines also worked as a senior economist at the Council for several years. Hines is a member of Edison Electric Institute’s ‘Energy Supply Executive Advisory Committee’ and the Pacific Northwest Utilities Conference Committee. Hines, a native of Bozeman, Montana, received his B.A and M.A. in Economics from the University of Montana. He and his wife Siobhan have two children and live in Helena.

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