

DRAFT

THE PROPER USE OF “*STUDYING WIND ENERGY/BIRD INTERACTIONS: A GUIDANCE DOCUMENT*”

The authors of “*Studying Wind Energy/Bird Interactions: A Guidance Document*” (document) provide a discussion below clarifying the proper use of the document.

The document provides an overview as well as a more technical discussion of the basic concepts and tools for scientific study, as applied to studying wind energy/bird interactions. The goal of the document is to provide guidance to persons involved in designing, conducting, or requiring wind energy/bird interaction studies, so that, as much as is practical, future studies use comparable methods and metrics. The use of standard methods and metrics should facilitate the comparison of wind energy/bird interactions done at different wind sites, thus improving our understanding of these interactions. This guidance is not intended nor shall it be construed to limit or preclude local, state, or federal agencies from exercising their authority under any applicable laws, ordinances, regulations, or standards (LORS). Establishing standard metrics, methods, and study designs does not reduce the potential for adverse impacts, mitigate impacts, or guarantee a siting permit. Each site possesses its own set of possibilities for effects on birds or other wildlife. It can, however, help ensure that credible, acceptable, scientifically rigorous bird information is gathered wherever such information is required for wind energy site development. The metrics, methods, and study designs described in this document can be

used for a complete range of projects, from two turbines to thousands of turbines. The authors encourage the use of this guidance in concert with other appropriate documents that may exist that provide guidance at the local or state level. This guidance is intended to assist in avoiding or minimizing collision impacts to birds through wise siting decisions. The authors suggest a precautionary approach to site selection and development, and encourage stakeholders to look for opportunities to promote bird and other wildlife conservation when planning wind energy facilities.

It is not possible, nor appropriate, to provide a detailed “cookbook” approach to each and every site-specific situation. Professional judgment, as well as local, state, and federal agency staff direction, and LORS, all come into play when determining the appropriate course of action. While not all jurisdictions will require the same level of information on birds in conjunction with permitting a wind energy development, any developer or any regulatory authority requiring avian research, can use the information in this document to create standard operating procedures or study designs, based on their objectives. We encourage industry and regulatory agencies to use the guidance and encourage feedback on its efficacy.

Produced by the Avian Subcommittee, “*Studying Wind Energy/Bird Interactions: A Guidance Document*” has been reviewed by a wide range of reviewers and has been endorsed by the National Wind Coordinating Committee as a valuable reference that can be used throughout the nation.