

Eagles: Permitting process and best practices for monitoring and mitigation

Questions and Answers

what are contexts for all this-what is wildlife concern and are wind energy turbines danger for eagles conservation?

Chris Farmer: Bald and golden eagles are legally protected in the United States. Eagle fatalities have occurred at some wind farms due to collisions with moving turbine blades. Development near eagle nests may also cause impacts via disturbance. There is some concern that, for golden eagles, such impacts may be additional to other, more frequent sources of fatalities, and the overall impact of human-caused fatalities may be limiting the population. Thus, there is an emphasis on avoiding such impacts to the extent practicable and offsetting any impacts that cannot be avoided. For bald eagles, there is less concern, because the population is increasing dramatically; impacts to bald eagles need to be avoided or minimized, but it is not usually necessary to offset any remaining impacts due to the growing population.

Can you further define the amount time/money required to fill out USFWS eagle data form?

Chris Farmer: The time and cost to populate the USFWS eagle data template is variable. Many projects have data from more than one consultant, and differences in data storage formats among companies can slow the process. Furthermore, the format of the template does not necessarily match the way data have been historically stored, which slows the process of populating the form. It is probably wise to assume 1-2 days of GIS and data manager labor and additional elapsed time will be necessary to populate, check, and transfer the data form; this should be considered when budgeting and scheduling for an eagle take permit application.

How can development and deployment of optical detection systems be accelerated? Is it a funding issue only, or are there other things holding this up?

Chris Farmer: The primary holdup on deployment and development is acceptance and adoption - by industry and regulatory agencies. Adoption and acceptance by these two entities are intertwined, and can best be accelerated by solid demonstrations of efficacy and cost-effectiveness; analyses are underway in this regard, and if the systems prove to be effective, this will hopefully advance their use.