

## **Cassadaga Wind Project Bird and Bat Conservation Strategy (BBCS) Outline**

1. Background and Purpose: this section will discuss the project's background and purpose for preparing a BBCS, including wildlife-related laws and voluntary guidance documents that apply to the project. It will include the following subsections:
  - a. Purpose of a BBCS
  - b. Site and Project Description
  - c. Regulatory Framework
  - d. Corporate Environmental Policy
  - e. Consultation History
2. Pre-construction Wildlife Surveys: this section will describe the pre-construction assessments and studies (Tiers 1 through 3 of the Land-based Wind Energy Guidelines [WEG]) that have been completed for the project, as well as an assessment of risk to birds and bats based on pre-construction study results. It will include the following subsections:
  - a. Desktop studies and work plans
  - b. Field Studies (including avian surveys, bat surveys, breeding bird survey, etc.)
  - c. Summary of Potential Adverse Impacts
3. Impact Avoidance and Minimization Measures: this section will describe the measures that were used during project design and that will be used during construction and operations to avoid and minimize impacts on birds and bats. It will include the following subsections:
  - a. Project Layout and Design, including but not limited to,
    - i. Structure Design:
      1. Turbines will have tubular supports rather than lattice supports to minimize bird perching and nesting opportunities.
      2. Turbines will have internal ladders and platforms to minimize perching and nesting.
      3. Permanent met towers will be free-standing structures without guy wires. If guy wires are necessary, the guy lines on met towers will be equipped with bird flight diverters
    - ii. Electrical collection and generator lead line:
      1. Electrical collection lines between turbines will be buried underground, avoiding the potential for bird mortality due to collision or electrocution.
      2. The buried collection lines will be located adjacent to Project access roads to the extent practicable to minimize clearing and disturbance.
      3. The Project generator lead line construction and operation will follow Avian Power Line Interaction Committee (APLIC) guidelines for avian protection on power lines.
  - b. Construction, including but not limited to

- i. Habitat removal will be minimized and timed to avoid direct impacts to roosting bats and breeding birds:
            - 1. Tree clearing will occur outside the breeding period for birds and bats (1 May – 1 October).
            - 2. The extent of forest clearing will be minimized to the maximum extent practicable.
            - 3. Construction clearings, storage yards, staging areas, or temporary roads not needed for long-term operation of the Project will be allowed to re-vegetate after Project commissioning.
  - c. Operation/Maintenance
    - i. Implementation of BMP to minimize impacts to bat species; feathering to manufacturer cut-in speed during fall bat migration period
4. Post-construction Monitoring: this section will describe the protocol that will be used for post-construction avian and bat mortality monitoring (Tier 4 of the WEG), which will be in accordance with DEC Wind Guidelines. It will include the following subsections:
  - a. Monitoring Methods
  - b. Study Design
  - c. Field Methods
  - d. Permits
  - e. Data Analysis and Reporting
  - f. Ongoing avian and bat monitoring
    - i. Wildlife incident reporting system
5. Adaptive Management and Mitigation: this section will discuss how impact avoidance/minimization measures may be adjusted if determined to be necessary based on the results of future studies and what mitigation may be considered should unexpected impacts to bird and bat species occur.
6. Eagle Protection Plan: this section will be devoted to specifically to eagles and include a framework and conservation measures discussed the Eagle Conservation Plan Guidance. It will include the following subsections:
  - a. Purpose and Regulatory Framework
  - b. Eagle surveys
    - i. Including eagles observed during other avian surveys and incidentally
  - c. Eagle use survey modeling
  - d. Eagle specific avoidance and minimization measures
    - i. Project siting and design
    - ii. Construction
    - iii. Operation
    - iv. Eagle Risk conclusion

- e. Eagle Post-construction monitoring
  - i. Incidental live or fatal eagle observation
  - ii. Reporting
  - iii. Training
- f. Ongoing eagle risk assessment
  - i. Annual database inquiry
  - ii. Nest surveys
  - iii. Agency coordination
- g. Eagle adaptive management

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