



## **Final Position Statement**

### **Energy Development and Wildlife**

Energy development on public and private land is growing to meet society's mounting energy needs. All forms of energy development can affect wildlife and wildlife habitat. The Wildlife Society seeks to minimize impacts of energy development on wildlife, while still recognizing energy development as an integral part of modern society.

Effects of energy development and production on wildlife include displacement, introduction of invasive species, increased exposure to human activities, and both direct and indirect mortality. Infrastructure from energy development can fragment landscapes and alter or cause loss of wildlife habitat and movement corridors.

Effects of energy development vary based on cover types, wildlife species, and ecosystems involved. Some ecosystems are particularly susceptible to disturbances because their biological diversity and net biological productivity are low. As a result, natural recovery following disturbances can be extremely slow.

National, provincial, and state agencies have the authority and mandate to require reasonable planning and mitigation measures that will minimize or avoid deterioration of public trust wildlife and wildlife habitat. Responsible management of energy projects on public lands include activities that sustain fish and wildlife habitat, protect environmental and ecological values, and provide for recreational use and aesthetic considerations.

The policy of The Wildlife Society regarding energy development is to:

1. Urge implementation of practical measures to avoid, reduce, or mitigate negative effects on wildlife and their habitats resulting from energy development.
2. Support a transparent adaptive energy development process that includes a) scientific monitoring, b) evaluating monitoring results, and c) using monitoring and evaluation information to adjust operations to reduce negative effects to wildlife and other natural resources.
3. Encourage early and continuing cooperation and coordination among state, provincial, and national agencies, and energy developers in land-use planning and development and implementation of siting, monitoring, and mitigation strategies in energy development.
4. Support an inventory of natural resources prior to an energy development project to include: soils, geology, vegetation, aquatic and wildlife resources, including seasonal and year-round occurrence, and other environmental and ecological considerations. This

inventory should be used to provide a baseline for monitoring, establish standards for conducting site specific pre- and post-development evaluations, and to formulate effective and appropriate mitigation.

5. Encourage lead agencies to issue a formal, science-based finding (statement of record) at the conclusion of each land management planning process related to energy development. These statements should objectively describe whether each plan or provisions of a permit would adequately conserve important wildlife resources affected by proposed actions and describe impacts anticipated as a result of the action.
6. Encourage energy developers to explore operations that will improve terrestrial and aquatic wildlife habitats and/or enhance wildlife populations.

Approved by Council October 2016. Expires October 2021.