



THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

Leaders in Wildlife Science, Management and Conservation

DATE: 7 January 2016

TO: All TWS Members in good standing

FROM: Keith Norris, Director of Government Affairs & Partnerships
On behalf of TWS Council

RE: Draft Position Statement for Member Review – Energy Development & Wildlife

Dear fellow TWS members,

The Wildlife Society's Council has approved the enclosed draft position statement for a 60-day member review and comment period. Finalized statements reflect the official position of your professional society. As such, your input into the process is a critical element to creating a robust statement, founded in scientific information and reflecting the best we have to offer as wildlife professionals.

Please review the attached document and provide your comments and suggested edits on the content, wording, and policies outlined. **All comments are due by 6 March 2016 to Caroline Murphy, Government Affairs Associate, caroline.murphy@wildlife.org.**

This statement consolidates four existing TWS position statements that discuss energy development and its impacts on wildlife populations and their habitats. These existing statements are available at www.wildlife.org/position-statements and include:

- Arctic National Wildlife Refuge
- Wind Energy Development
- Oil & Gas Development
- Petroleum in Arctic & Coastal Regions

These statements were consolidated by a Council Subcommittee to allow for a simpler, more streamlined approach to related issues and to provide a more clear expression of TWS' positions.

Thank you for lending your scientific expertise to this important process of directing the Society's policy engagement activities in support of wildlife professionals.

Sincerely,

Keith Norris, AWB®

Director of Government Affairs & Partnerships



THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

Leaders in Wildlife Science, Management and Conservation

DRAFT 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.

Direct effects of energy development and production on wildlife include displacement, introduction of invasive species, increased exposure to human activities, and direct 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. For example, polar and boreal ecosystems are particularly susceptible to disturbances because their biological diversity and net biological productivity are low. As a result, natural recovery following disturbances is extremely slow in most northern soil-plant systems.

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. It is reasonable and responsible to manage energy projects on public lands in a manner that sustains fish and wildlife habitat and public recreation, protects environmental and ecological values, and provides for aesthetic considerations.

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

1. Support active management of the energy development process through a transparent adaptive process that includes a) scientific monitoring, b) evaluating monitoring results, and c) using monitoring and evaluation information to document positive and negative effects on wildlife and wildlife habitat and adjust operations to reduce negative effects to wildlife and other natural resources.
2. Encourage developing and implementing guidelines for siting, monitoring, and mitigation strategies by states, provinces, and national agencies that establish standards for conducting site-specific and pre- and post-development evaluations.
3. Encourage early and continuing cooperation among state, provincial, and national agencies in land-use planning. Regional assessments of cumulative land-use and impacts from energy development in addition to regional mapping to identify areas of high importance to wildlife, such as breeding and wintering areas, will assist in land-use planning.
4. Urge that practical measures be taken to reduce or mitigate all environmental and biotic damage resulting from energy development.

5. Support requirement of a complete inventory of resources prior to an energy development project, including soils, geology, vegetation, aquatic and wildlife resources, and other environmental and ecological considerations, to provide a baseline for monitoring and to formulate effective and appropriate mitigation.
6. When appropriate and not otherwise required by other agencies (e.g., NEPA reviews), encourage wildlife agencies to issue a formal, science-based finding (statement of record) at the conclusion of each land management planning process. 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.

DRAFT DOCUMENT