Fatality Monitoring For Low Risk Sites

Monitoring protocols for low-risk sites are designed to collect information on fatalities for project areas that lack any indication that fatalities could be significant. Monitoring of low-risk sites is considered baseline data collection to determine if avian or bat fatalities are greater than anticipated. Additional monitoring may be recommended if fatalities are high or if state-listed species are killed. Data collected using low-risk protocols should not be used to draw strong conclusions concerning fatalities at the site.

Summary of Low-Risk Protocol

1) Minimum of 1 search day per week with a minimum of 3 days of separation between searches.
2) Minimum of 1 field season of monitoring. If high fatalities are occurring a second year of monitoring may be recommended.
3) Monitoring is conducted from March 15-November 15.
4) Minimum number of turbines searched is 10.
5) Search area of 80 m (160 m per rectangular side) in all cardinal directions from the base of the turbine.
6) Searcher efficiency trials use a minimum of 75 placed carcasses.
7) Scavenger removal trials use a minimum of 50.
8) Search time minimum of 1-2 hours.
9) Minimum of 2 fatality estimators used.

Road and Pad Protocol

The agencies will consider the use of road and pad protocols under some circumstances. Projects with greater than 45 turbines and very dense vegetation may warrant the use of road and pad searches. For additional information on this technique see Bat Monitoring Studies at the Fowler Ridge Wind Farm (Good et. al. 2012).

Summary of Road and Pad Protocols

1) Minimum of 5 full plot searches, as decribed above, are necessary. Plots are cleared of vegetation.
2) Minimum of 40 road and pad search areas.
3) High Risk is 4 search days per week, Moderate 2, and Low-Risk 1.
4) High Risk monitoring is conducted for a minimum of 2 field seasons, Moderate and Low Risk sites one field season with potential for a second season if high fatalities are occurring.

5) Field season is March 15 to November 15.
6) Search area of 80 m (160 m per rectangular side) in all cardinal directions from the base of the turbine for full search plots, and 80 m from the turbine base for the road and pad component.
7) Searcher efficiency trials use a minimum of 100 carcasses placed.
8) Scavenger removal trials use a minimum of 50 carcasses placed.
9) Searcher and scavenger removal trials are conducted in a manner to differentiate between full search plots and road and pads.
10) Minimum of 2 agreed upon fatality estimators used.