

NOTES | 7/02/2008

Altamont Pass Wind Resource Area Scientific Review Committee Conference Call

Prepared by the Center for Collaborative Policy
Reviewed and Final Approval by the SRC 8/14/2008

Agenda Items

- Meeting Summary Approval
- Scavenger Removal and Searcher Detection (Data Quality Assurance/Quality Control) Study

Note--SRC member Joanna Burger was unable to participate during the call so the SRC reached no major decisions and limited discussion to initial feedback on the Monitoring Team's proposal.

Meeting Summaries Approved

[P86 SRC Meeting Notes 3-18-08 Conference Call](#)

[P89 SRC Meeting Notes 3-26-08 Conference Call](#)

The SRC approved these meeting notes, contingent on Joanna Burger's review. Facilitator Gina Bartlett consulted with Dr. Burger after the meeting, who had no additional changes on the meeting summaries. Thus, these two summaries are SRC approved.

Scavenger Removal and Searcher Detection (Data Quality Assurance/Quality Control) Study Related Documents

[P98 Data Quality Assurance and Control Methods Review \(6-30-08\)](#)

The Monitoring Team (MT) prepared this proposal in response to numerous discussions held with the SRC and public about improving scavenging and searcher detection correction factors. The SRC and public asked clarifying questions and provided general feedback on the methods proposed. The SRC will consider recommending this modification to the monitoring protocols at its July 8-9, 2008, in-person meeting.

Henceforth, this will be referred to as the **Data Quality Assurance/Quality Control**. This proposal would modify the monitoring protocols: instead of correcting mortality estimates using searcher detection and scavenger removal factors, the MT would adjust the mortality estimates using this QA/QC process. This would eliminate some of the errors and concerns associated with the scavenging and searcher detection correction factors, such as the unknown interaction between the two terms. This would have potential implications for other wind farms as well.

It's difficult to know the effect of bird density (the number of birds in a certain area). The best way to manage this is to have a permanent QA/QC program.

The MT has been collecting scavenging data on all raptors. For the reports, the MT has been using Smallwood's correction factors. The MT has not calculated the correction factor using its scavenging data yet. The MT will publish its correction factors based on scavenger work as part of a

suite of reports later this summer. The MT calculation would replace the scavenger rate for raptors only; not the searcher detection factor. The MT would continue using Smallwood searcher detection factor until considering using the new QA/QC method.

The monitoring team said they planned to use estimates of days since death to adjust mortality for scavenger removal. Smallwood disagreed with this approach, arguing that the error ranges around the monitoring team's estimates of days since death were too large and are subject to bias. Many estimates of days since death range 0-90 days, and that range is routinely applied to certain types of evidence such as feather piles. Smallwood referenced his recent report (P101) as evidence of bias in estimating days since death. If the approach is taken, the monitoring team would need to carry the error term from this adjustment through the calculation of mortality, but since the error term is so large, Smallwood advocated against taking this approach.

SRC needs to discuss further: The MT proposal assumed that the goal is an adjustment factor for the four target species, which involves marking the target species only. The SRC discussed that the goal should be for all size classes and groups of birds. The SRC agreed to defer the goal discussion to the July in-person meeting so Joanna Burger could participate in the discussion.

PARTICIPANTS

SRC

Jim Estep

Sue Orloff

Shawn Smallwood

Julie Yee

(Joanna Burger unable to participate.)

Monitoring Team

Brian Latta

Brian Karas

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Participants Identified

Bill Damon

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