

**NOTES** | 8/20/2009 Conference Call

**Altamont Pass Wind Resource Area Scientific Review Committee**

Prepared by the Center for Collaborative Policy

Reviewed and approved by the SRC

**Discussion Topics**

- **Scavenging Removal Rate: Subcommittee Report on Applying Adjustment Factors**
- **SRC Schedule to Close Out Three-Year Process (Questions from Settling Parties)**
- **Planning the Agenda for In-Person Meeting (Sept. 22-24)**
- **Approve Meeting Summary**

**Meeting Outcomes**

- The SRC's September 22-24 in-person meeting will be centered on an analytical workshop, in which participants will work through the data and analysis in real time to develop consensus.
- The July 20 conference call meeting notes, P115, were approved with changes

**Action Items**

- Jesse Schwartz will produce for the September 17 conference call a descriptive document for the database walk-through.

**Scavenging Removal Rate: Subcommittee Report on Applying Adjustment Factors**

**Related Documents**

[M32 APWRA Draft 48-Hour Search Interval \(KB\) Study, June 2009](#)

Jesse Schwartz of the Monitoring Team said the SRC Subcommittee met August 17. They reviewed and discussed data and data analysis for the 48-Hour Search Interval (KB) Report (M32).

The Monitoring Team sought Subcommittee advice on the analytical portion of the report. Options for dealing with analytical uncertainties include:

1. Focus the report on the data and descriptive statistics
2. Attempt to develop consensus on the analytical approach.
3. The Monitoring Team could draft the report based on its own preferred analytical approach.

One Subcommittee member said it is not necessary to resolve the question about how to apply the survival analysis curves to the found fatalities in order to complete the report.

Subcommittee members gave individual recommendations. One proposed to place all carcasses together, regardless of fatality type. The second Subcommittee member favored using the whole carcass removal rate, or the rate utilized in the literature, if it is the same.

Rates for feather piles or partial carcasses could be applied separately to come up with separate fatality rates, and then they could be added together. However, this SRC member said the Monitoring Team should move forward with the approach it thinks is best; SRC members are only making recommendations.

Monitoring Team members said the Monitoring Team has probably resolved to use the scavenger removal rate from the KB report for other analyses, and has resolved that the survival model would be more appropriate than a regression model. The major issue is how to handle the data from feather piles and partial carcasses, as those curves look very different from the curve for whole carcasses. The problem is that the data are very biased, as there were nine whole carcasses found and 41 other carcass types found. The original meta-analysis is built around placed whole carcasses.

### **SRC Questions and Comments**

One SRC member suggested a weighted average as a better approach.

Another suggested looking at what percentage of carcasses in a year's worth of data are of one type or another, and weighting the average according to that distribution. The question is how different the percentage of whole carcasses is from what is normally seen by the Monitoring Team in the field.

A Subcommittee member said the issue is that the only study available for that analysis is the KB study. The Monitoring Team's regular searches do not provide information on the proportions of fatality types.

SRC members noted that turbine-related fatalities would fall as whole or partial carcasses, but not as feather piles. If there is any predation, the result would never be a whole carcass.

Facilitator Gina Bartlett said the goal of the process is to develop a consensus on the analytical approach and results, so that it can direct policy. How do SRC members want to strive to resolve these issues to produce an analysis that has credibility, is consistent, and can be used by all the parties?

SRC members replied that this is a very substantial issue and an important decision. It may be that there are a large number of burrowing owls killed every year in the Altamont Pass, and most are found as feather piles. It will also be important to interact with the stakeholders and consider their suggestions. In addition, the Monitoring Team will need to acknowledge in the report that the issue may not be fully resolved, and that other methods could have been used.

One SRC member said it would be important to discuss the issue in person in order to resolve it, and work through the math quantitatively. Otherwise, they are talking in circles.

### **Public Comment**

Bill Warren-Hicks said he is working on another approach, which he will share soon, once it is complete. He would appreciate if the Monitoring Team would write the report so he can

see the equations used. Given the difficulty of the issue, one possible approach would be to produce a range of answers.

Mike Boyd of CARE asked that the data be produced in an Excel file, so the public can see the equations.

Jesse Schwartz of the Monitoring Team said one problem is that Excel can be corrupted.

He suggested that a workshop be held in which participants would develop analytical content in real time. This would provide opportunity for review of the data and the analytical approach, so differences in approaches can be resolved at that time. The workshop would deal with all the analytical issues, not just adjustment factors, to work toward a final report.

Sandra Rivera said it would be important for the entire SRC, not just Subcommittee members, to be involved, in person.

SRC members supported the idea.

## **SRC Schedule to Close out Three-Year Process (Question from Settling Parties)**

### **Related Documents**

[P119 Request from Audubon, County and Settling Party Companies to SRC \(8-18-09\)](#)

Sandra Rivera of Alameda County said the Settling Parties have developed a document with several questions about timing, to help in schedule planning.

Martin Homec and Mike Boyd of Californians for Renewable Energy (CARE) said their organization had not agreed to the document.

Facilitator Gina Bartlett said it appears that the document does not represent CARE, but represents only Audubon, Alameda County and the settling wind companies. She suggested that these parties raise their issues, based on that understanding.

Sandra Rivera said the process has been delayed, and the parties, excluding CARE, want to know how much time the SRC would need for:

1. Answering the 50% reduction in mortality question
2. Identifying scaling factors appropriate for the analysis
3. Commenting on adaptive management measures, which have not yet been presented.

The workshop will also take more time. She asked that SRC members think about these questions, and provide answers at the end of the next in-person meeting so changes can be made in the settlement agreement to allow for the additional time.

SRC members asked about the schedule for non-settling parties.

Rivera said AWI has a third-year review scheduled for September 17. Other than their seasonal shutdown and compliance requirements, they don't have an SRC component. There is an effort to change the AWI permits so they can take part in the conservation plan.

An SRC member said the SRC will need to review a draft of the monitoring report before it can make recommendations.

In response to a question, Rivera said the effective date of the settlement agreement is January 11, 2007.

An SRC member said, if monitoring ends in October, it will not be providing three years of data.

Rivera said that is an issue and that the Settlement Agreement didn't account for the report to be completed in time for the SRC to review.

### **Planning the Agenda for In-Person Meeting (Sept. 22-24)**

Facilitator Gina Bartlett and Sandi Rivera of Alameda County reviewed the items that will be on the September agenda.

Participants decided on the following meeting dates:

- A three-day in-person meeting September 22-24
- Conference call meetings on September 9 and 17

SRC members said the approach in the workshop could be similar to the meeting in which they worked through turbine ratings. Work should continue into the evening, if necessary.

Jesse Schwartz said he would start with post-processing of the data, summarizing the data and filtering procedures, using Diablo Winds or shutdown data. The workshop would then walk through the analytical process and the different adjustments and expansions to show all the different analytical approaches. The goal will be to get consensus on the analytical approach, that it is a reasonable representation of reality. It would be an open forum.

The September 17 conference call would be used to ready participants for September 22.

### **Public Comment**

Renee Culver of NextEra supported the workshop idea. She asked what kind of preparation would be needed in order to make sure the workshop can be productive.

Bill Warren-Hicks said this approach would be more inclusive and may result in a better dialogue. Participants could agree on the data set beforehand and show up to work with it. He could also show how he is setting up his data.

### **Approve Meeting Summary**

#### **Related Documents:**

[P115 SRC Meeting Notes 7-20-09 Conference Call](#)

The SRC approved the P115 meeting summary for the July 20 conference call, subject to the following changes:

- Add page numbers
- On Page 3, overview of seasonal shutdown approach, clarify that Wally Erickson first raised the idea, and afterwards Shawn Smallwood ran the numbers.
- Page 4 at the top: reference to Smallwood’s report should be revised.

In other items, an SRC member recommended that the document name for P119 be renamed, as it does not reflect the input of all settling parties. In addition, it should be renamed as an S. item, not a P item.

**Next Steps**

- Jesse Schwartz will produce for the September 17 conference call a descriptive document for the database walk-through.

**ATTENDEES**

**SRC**

Joanna Burger  
Jim Estep  
Sue Orloff  
Shawn Smallwood  
Julie Yee

Mike Boyd  
Renee Culver  
Jim Hopper  
Mike Lynes  
Steve Mullen  
Bob Power  
Joan Stewart  
Bill Warren-Hicks

**Consultants**

Doug Leslie  
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**Staff**

Sandra Rivera, Alameda County  
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**Identified Public**