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Jim Wiegand Comments Against Fountain Wind #14

Altamont Conducted a Mortality Study with 5-day Search Intervals. Here's more Insight into the history of the unscientific research conducted at the Altamont Pass Wind Resource Area.

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

Altamont Conducted a Mortality Study with 5-day Search Intervals

BIRD AND BAT IMPACTS AND BEHAVIORS AT OLD WIND TURBINES AT FOREBAY, ALTAMONT PASS WIND RESOURCE AREA

Prepared for: California Energy Commission
Prepared by: K. Shawn Smallwood



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CEC-500-2016-066

Results Showed Mortality Rates 25 Times Higher

The fatality rates estimated at wind turbines with 5-day search intervals even exceeded McCrary's estimates in his 1985 scientific study conducted in a desert habitat. In this study at Altamont **the reported "fatality rates for all birds were 45 fatalities/MW/year at the selected turbines."** The study also mentioned "the

shorter than usual search interval probably also managed to detect more of the available small bird fatalities.”

“Most of the contribution to these high fatality rates was the detections of fatalities representing many species of small birds.”

When compared to earlier Altamont studies, with their absurd and unscientific 30-90-day search intervals, **the fatalities reported in this study were 25 times higher.** Yet, this study was still not scientific. It still lacked the daily searches and controls that give the most reliable results.

After making reasonable adjustments to Altamont’s deceptive research, I believe Altamont pass was at one time killing over 50,000 birds and bat per year.

For decades, the CEC has kicked science to the curb, so a network of green conspirators could prosper. It’s also very reasonable to assume, since no scientifically credible mortality research has ever taken place at Altamont pass, green energy researchers and the California Energy Commission, have **likely hidden 500,000-1,000,000 fatalities at this facility over the last 35 years.**

Unscientific Results from previous Altamont studies

Table 3-9. Summary of unadjusted mortality estimates for two sets of wind turbines searched at different time periods at the Altamont Pass Wind Resource Area. Set 1 included 1,526 wind turbines searched May 1998–September 2002, and Set 2 included 2,548 wind turbines searched November 2002–May 2003.

Species/Taxonomic group	Mortality (deaths/MW/year) across first set of 1,526 turbines		Mortality (deaths/MW/year) across second set of 2,548 turbines	
	Mean among turbine strings	Standard error of mean	Mean among turbine strings	Standard error of mean
All raptors	0.9526	0.09095	1.2332	0.17686
All birds	2.1500	0.20734	1.4690	0.22695

Table 3-5. Annual Adjusted Focal Species Fatality Rates (Fatalities per Megawatt and 95% CI) in the APWRA based on QAQC Detection Probabilities, Bird Years 2005–2010

Species/Category	Bird Year and Rate (95% CI)					
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
American kestrel	0.34 (0.30–0.38)	0.58 (0.52–0.63)	0.59 (0.54–0.65)	0.40 (0.36–0.43)	0.37 (0.34–0.39)	0.44 (0.36–0.52)
Burrowing owl	0.53 (0.47–0.59)	1.63 (1.49–1.77)	0.59 (0.54–0.64)	0.26 (0.23–0.29)	0.47 (0.43–0.51)	0.42 (0.34–0.49)
Golden eagle	0.08 (0.07–0.08)	0.17 (0.16–0.18)	0.08 (0.07–0.08)	0.05 (0.05–0.05)	0.06 (0.05–0.06)	0.07 (0.06–0.08)
Red-tailed hawk	0.62 (0.59–0.66)	0.78 (0.73–0.82)	0.39 (0.38–0.41)	0.21 (0.20–0.22)	0.18 (0.17–0.19)	0.45 (0.41–0.48)
Total focal species	1.58 (1.50–1.66)	3.15 (2.99–3.30)	1.65 (1.58–1.73)	0.92 (0.87–0.96)	1.07 (1.03–1.12)	1.38 (1.26–1.49)

Table 3-6. Annual Adjusted Focal Species Fatality Rates (Fatalities per Megawatt and 95% CI) in the APWRA Based on Modified Smallwood (2007) Detection Probabilities, Bird Years 2005–2010

Species/Category	Bird Year and Rate (95% CI)					
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
American kestrel	0.57 (0.50–0.71)	0.90 (0.78–1.01)	0.92 (0.80–1.05)	0.57 (0.51–0.63)	0.56 (0.50–0.62)	0.69 (0.55–0.84)
Burrowing owl	0.90 (0.75–1.05)	2.43 (2.16–2.70)	0.88 (0.79–0.98)	0.36 (0.31–0.41)	0.70 (0.62–0.78)	0.62 (0.49–0.75)
Golden eagle	0.07 (0.07–0.08)	0.16 (0.15–0.17)	0.07 (0.07–0.08)	0.05 (0.05–0.05)	0.05 (0.05–0.06)	0.07 (0.05–0.08)
Red-tailed hawk	0.39 (0.37–0.41)	0.54 (0.51–0.58)	0.28 (0.26–0.29)	0.15 (0.14–0.16)	0.13 (0.12–0.13)	0.32 (0.29–0.34)
Total focal species	1.93 (1.77–2.14)	4.03 (3.73–4.32)	2.16 (2.00–2.32)	1.13 (1.05–1.21)	1.44 (1.35–1.54)	1.70 (1.50–1.89)

The **24-hour search intervals** are critical for reliable data. Even mortality studies going back decades on communication towers used daily searches for the most reliable carcass data. But this procedure has deliberately been avoided by Altamont pass and almost every green energy study.

Since 2003 much of Altamont has been repowered with their new turbines. This wind resource area with its huge turbines now has far more cubic feet of deadly rotor sweep, with turbine blades moving with tip speeds 50 mph faster.

As of Dec 2023, not one scientifically credible study has been conducted at Altamont Pass.

Jim Wiegand - Wildlife Biologist