

Wind Energy and Wildlife

Keeping Track of Impacts



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How does the Milford Wind Corridor impact wildlife? Long before any construction began, researchers worked closely with BLM biologists to design studies and gather baseline data on wildlife species that live in or visit the site, including birds of prey (hawks, eagles, owls), bats, migratory birds, and more.

First Wind biologists surveyed active raptor nests; conducted acoustic monitoring of bats; and carried out field assessments of migratory birds, reptiles, and mammals.

Their findings influenced the timing and process of turbine and transmission line construction, as well as on-going management.

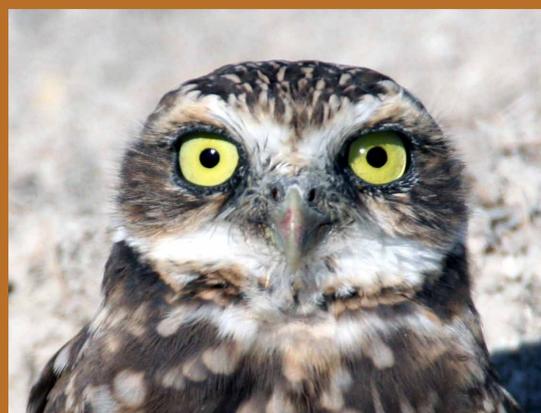
Wildlife researchers, site managers, and BLM staff continue to monitor the site regularly to ensure the impact to local wildlife is minimized.



Pronghorn at Milford Wind Corridor Site.

Who lives here?

The Milford Wind Corridor provides habitat to many wild animals, from coyotes and pronghorn to pocket gophers and Brazilian free-tailed bats. This natural community includes three Utah BLM sensitive species— burrowing owl, long-billed curlew, and kit fox.



Burrowing owls are active both day and night. Look carefully, and you may spot one near its burrow, hunting insects and small mammals. They can dig their own burrows, but often nest in burrows dug by other animals, like prairie dogs and kit foxes.



North America's largest shorebird, the long-billed curlew summers in the arid grasslands of the Great Plains and Great Basin. It probes for invertebrates with its gracefully curved bill and nests on the ground, crafting a shallow hollow lined with grass and twigs.



Post-Construction: Monitoring and Management

First Wind biologists teamed with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Utah Department of Natural Resources, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to develop a post-construction monitoring and adaptive management plan for wildlife in the project area. Through follow-up monitoring, biologists can determine how the project is affecting wildlife populations and assess strategies to limit or reduce adverse effects.



The kit fox's sensitive eyes and big ears help it hunt in dim light for jackrabbits, cottontails, grasshoppers, lizards, birds, fruit, and more. Just three to four pounds when full-grown, kit foxes use burrows to avoid predators and extreme heat and cold.

For more information:

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