

January 15, 2025

Ms. Heather Beeler
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office
2800 Cottage Way, W2605
Sacramento, CA 95825

Subject: Twelfth Annual Report for Sacramento Municipal Utility District's Special Purpose Utility Permit for Migratory Bird Mortality Monitoring, Solano Wind Project (Permit # MB189818-0)

Dear Ms. Beeler:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) issued a Special Purpose Utility (SPUT) permit for the Solano Wind Project to the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) on September 9, 2013, and renewed the permit on October 9, 2020. Attachment A, the completed Form 3-202-17 spreadsheet, is submitted in accordance with the terms of the SPUT permit. This report fulfills the quarterly reporting requirement.

From June 2021 through March 2024, SMUD conducted eagle mortality monitoring on the Solano Wind Project Phases 1, 2, and 3 in compliance with the programmatic incidental take permit ("ITP", Permit #MB02735B-0) issued by the Service on October 19, 2019. Eagle mortality monitoring was discontinued after March 2024 and no standardized searches occurred at Solano Wind Farm during April and May of 2024.

Between February and June 2024, SMUD removed smaller Phase 1 turbines as part of a repowering effort and replaced them with 19 larger turbines comprising the new Solano 4 Wind Project. In compliance with the Solano 4 Wind Project Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program ("MMRP", State Clearinghouse Number 2019012016), SMUD initiated a bird and bat mortality monitoring (BBMM) program, consisting of "Monthly" and "Migration" carcass searches below the 19 project turbines. Migration searches are performed only during the fall and spring migratory periods (mid-July to mid-October and March through May, respectively), at the midpoint between Monthly searches, to better quantify mortality of small birds and bats, which do not persist as long as larger carcasses.

This report describes carcasses detected during the eagle mortality monitoring at Solano Wind Farm Phases 2 and 3 from January through March 2024, Monthly and Migration BBMM surveys for the bird and bat mortality monitoring at Solano 4 from June through December 2024, and carcasses discovered incidentally during routine operations and maintenance activities at all operational project components for the period of January 1st, 2024 through December 31st, 2024.

First quarter eagle mortality surveys in January were conducted from January 16 through January 19, 2024. February searches were conducted from February 20 through February 23, 2024. March searches were conducted from March 19 through March 22, 2024. During January surveys, four carcasses were detected including two snow geese, one American kestrel, and one unidentified (non-raptor) species. Additionally, three carcasses were detected incidentally in January including two American kestrels and one red-tailed hawk. No incidents were detected during February surveys, however, two incidents were detected incidentally in February. Both incidents were red-tailed hawks. During March surveys, one Eurasian collared-dove carcass was detected. One ring necked pheasant mortality was detected incidentally during March.

The only survey conducted at Solano Wind Farm during the second quarter of the year was an initial "clean sweep" of the 19 Solano 4 East and West turbines on June 25-27, 2024. During the June clean

sweep of Solano 4 East and West, six carcasses were detected including two northern harrier, one mallard, one red-winged blackbird, one turkey vulture, and one Swainson's hawk. Additionally, two carcasses were detected incidentally during the second quarter (all during June) including one turkey vulture and one red-tailed hawk.

Third quarter monthly BBMM surveys in July were conducted from July 23 through July 25, 2024. August migration searches were conducted from August 6 through August 8, 2024, and monthly searches were conducted from August 20 through August 22, 2024. September migration searches were conducted on September 4 and September 5, 2024, and monthly searches were conducted from September 17 through September 19, 2024. During July searches, two carcasses were detected including one red-winged blackbird and one red-tailed hawk. Additionally, two red-tailed hawk mortalities were detected incidentally in July. During August Migration searches, four carcasses were detected including one hoary bat, one Mexican free-tailed bat, one unidentified bat, and one northern harrier. During August Monthly searches, six carcasses were detected, including two red-winged blackbirds, one turkey vulture, one red-tailed hawk, one northern harrier, and one Mexican free-tailed bat. Additionally, one American kestrel was detected incidentally in August. During September Migration searches, six carcasses were detected including three Mexican free-tailed bats, two turkey vultures, and one Virginia rail. During September Monthly searches, eight carcasses were detected including one mourning dove, one sora, one Mexican free-tailed bat, one unidentified bat, one unidentified blackbird, one Virginia rail, one American kestrel, and one Swainson's hawk. Additionally, three carcasses were detected incidentally in September including one mourning dove, one loggerhead shrike, and one Mexican free-tailed bat.

Fourth quarter October migration searches were conducted on October 1 and October 3, 2024 and monthly searches were conducted on October 15 and October 16, 2024. November monthly searches were conducted from November 19 through November 21, 2024. December monthly searches were conducted from December 17 through December 19, 2024. During October migration searches, seven carcasses were detected including two Mexican-free tailed bats, two unidentified bats, one American Kestrel, and two red-tailed hawks. During October monthly searches, five carcasses were detected including one mourning dove, one western meadowlark, two unidentified passerines, and one hoary bat. Additionally, two mortalities were detected incidentally in October including one Swainson's hawk and one Mexican free-tailed bat. During November monthly searches, ten carcasses were detected including two red-tailed hawks, one American kestrel, one northern harrier, four unidentified passerines, one Mexican free-tailed bat, and one unidentified bat. Additionally, four mortalities were detected incidentally in November, including one western meadowlark, one ruby-crowned kinglet, and one unidentified bat. During December monthly searches, nine carcasses were detected including four red-tailed hawks, one mourning dove, one European starling, one western meadowlark, one unidentified swallow, and one unidentified passerine.

In accordance with permit requirements, the Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) were notified of incidents involving federally or state protected species. Except for the Swainson's Hawk remains, some of which were provided to CDFW or museums, all carcasses are stored at an on-site freezer at the SMUD Solano Wind Project facility for at least one calendar year or are being used for searcher efficiency or carcass persistence trials.

If you have any questions, please call me at (916) 732-6334.

Sincerely,



Ammon Rice
Environmental Services, Supervisor

Cc:
Susan Sanders, AECOM

Petra Unger, AECOM

Attachment A – Form 3-202-17 Excel Spreadsheet

ATTACHMENT A

Special Purpose Utility (Avian Take Monitoring) – 2024 Annual Report
Report Form 3-202-17 v. 2.0