

Commentary

A Glimpse At Our Potential Wind Industry

BY RITA BRHEL
P&D Correspondent

I recently returned home from a family road trip to Indiana, and on the way there and back, we passed through the edge of Iowa's wind farms. Massive white turbines towered above us, churning slowly through the air. We were all enthralled at the sight.

Even my 3-year-old son turned down the opportunity of seeing a semi carrying a double-decker trailer of new vehicles. He told me he didn't care about that, he wanted to watch the turbines, and spent much of the rest of the afternoon asking his oldest sister to draw yet another turbine on his coloring paper.

The sight of these wind turbines tickled a part of my brain, bringing up a news story I wrote for the *Press & Dakotan* years ago. It



Rita BRHEL

was probably 10 or 11 years ago when I attended a meeting in a small community near Yankton, where landowners were gathered to discuss the possibility of erecting their own turbines and kick-starting the state's wind industry.

I also remember the realization that while the landowners may be willing and ready, the infrastructure definitely wasn't, and the project was put on hold. For how long, probably nobody knows.

After returning home from the road trip, I did a little research into Iowa's wind industry.

It turns out that our eastern neighbor is the leading U.S. state in wind power generation, with 27.4 percent of the state's electricity coming from wind in 2013.

So how did Iowa get there? For one reason, the state is invested in making wind power work. In addition to using federal programs, the state of Iowa provides a kilowatt-hour tax credit, property tax breaks and equipment sales tax exemptions as incentives.

The development of Iowa's wind industry began clear back in 1983 when a law was passed requiring investor-owned utilities to buy a portion of power from wind-generated sources. What this did was provide assurance to those building wind power installations that there would be a ready market for the electricity they produced.

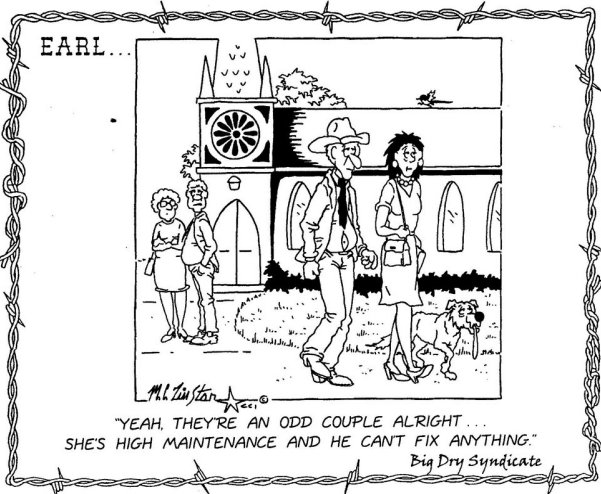
And the rest is history.

To date, there are 15 wind farms operating in Iowa, mostly in the northern and west-central region. There are also three more wind farms under construction. Of course, each of these wind farms are huge, spanning miles and miles.

Of course, South Dakota and Nebraska each have wind farms now, too. They are negligible compared to Iowa, but they certainly have the potential. Nebraska's best areas for wind power lie at about Hartington, Neb., westward to the western borders.

South Dakota has even better wind potential, especially in West River. But either state has more wind energy potential than Iowa, the nation's leader. In fact, South Dakota could easily out-produce Iowa and Nebraska combined.

Now there's something to think about.



Ag CEO FSA Borrower Training To Start

BROOKINGS — Ag CEO FSA Borrower Training will be offered starting Oct. 14 in Winner.

Ag CEO FSA Borrower Training is a five-week program consisting of producers meeting once a week for three hours. Producers who complete all of this training will meet their requirements for FSA borrower status.

The educational program is designed to teach farmers and ranchers — especially those who are just beginning in the industry — to use a systems approach to farm business planning. "With rapid changes occurring in agriculture, there is a need for producers to improve record keeping and be financially knowledgeable in operating their farms and ranches," said Shannon Sand, SDSU Extension Livestock Business Management Field Specialist.

Strategic planning, calculating breakeven costs, developing budgets and creating benchmarks to analyze short and long-term financial performance, along with progress toward production goals, are the main focuses of Ag CEO — and are key business principles for establishing a profitable and sustainable operation, noted Sand.

The dates of the program are Oct. 14, Oct. 22, Oct. 29, Nov. 5, and Nov. 12. The meetings will be held at the Extension Regional Center in Winner, 325 S. Monroe St., Winner, SD 57580.

For more information and to register for the program, visit www.iGrow.org or contact Shannon Sand, 605-394-1722 or Shannon.sand@sdstate.edu or Heather Gessner, 605-782-3290 or heather.gessner@sdstate.edu.

Yellow Dime Day Celebrates Ethanol

HURON — Locally produced, ethanol is a clean, renewable fuel which saves consumers nearly 30 cents per gallon at the pump compared to petroleum's unleaded.

"That's a savings of nearly \$120 million annually," explains Doug Sombke, President of South Dakota Farmers Union. "Ethanol eliminates cancer-causing benzene and in the case of E-30, provides better performance. This is a product that is better for you, the environment and South Dakota's farming community."

To increase awareness of ethanol's efficiency, environmental benefits and economic impact, the organization is hosting Yellow Dime Day at two South Dakota fuel stations: Oct. 16, 2014 at Kusler's in Aberdeen (602 S Main St) and Oct. 23, 2014 at Cenex C-Store (1601 9th Ave SE) Watertown.

During Yellow Dime Day, every gallon of E-30 drivers purchase, they receive a yellow dime in return.

"It's great to fuel up with a product that is produced locally. In our case, the ethanol we blend is produced at Glacial Lakes Energy right here in Watertown," says Jared Landmark, CEO of Sioux Valley Cooperative, a petroleum retail cooperative and one of the fuel stations participating in Yellow Dime Day.

Although drivers have had the option to fuel up with ethanol for quite some time, and multiple performance studies have proven its safety and efficiency, Landmark says there are still some who don't choose to fuel up with the locally produced option. "Yellow Dime Day provides a great opportunity to try blended fuel," Landmark says. "I don't drive a flex-fuel vehicle, but I trust E-30 and when I fuel up with it, I get great performance and gas mileage."

No. States Beef Conference Jan. 5-6

BROOKINGS — SDSU Extension will host the Northern States Beef Conference together with NDSU Extension and Minnesota State Extension Jan. 5-6, 2015, in Morton, Minn., at Jackpot Junction.

The conference will include workshops and speakers covering the following topics: "Capitalizing on high beef markets;" "How is the market shaping cattle phenotypes?" "Breeding programs to supply the U.S. with beef;" "Efficiency and high production: Can they coexist?" "Nutritional management of the beef female for improved reproduction;" "Post-birth interventions to reduce calf losses;" "When does intensifying cow/calf production make sense?" "Forage and pasture management to reduce cost of production;" "Long-term impact of selection for efficiency in the cowherd on production: Successful and futuristic feedlot design and management;" "Programs and tools to retain efficiency in the feedlot;" "Feeding and managing for various target endpoints;" and "Question and Answer Panel on feedlot management."

To learn more, contact Julie Walker, Associate Professor in Animal Science SDSU Extension Beef Specialist, julie.walker@sdstate.edu.

Pesticides And Songbirds

A Study Blames Pesticide Use For The Decline Of Songbirds In The Farmlands

BY RITA BRHEL
P&D Correspondent

Nearly all species of native grassland songbirds are on the decline and have been for decades. It's long been assumed that the leading cause of this population loss was less habitat, as pastures were converted into cropland.

Not so, according to the American Bird Conservancy (ABC) in The Plains, Va., which instead blames pesticide use.

"We are still concerned about loss of habitat in agriculture, range management and urban development, but we also need to rein in the use of lethal pesticides in agriculture and we need to be especially careful about any new pesticides we introduce into these ecosystems," said Cynthia Palmer, pesticides manager at ABC. "The poisonings of birds and other wildlife chronicled a half-century ago are by no means a thing of the past."

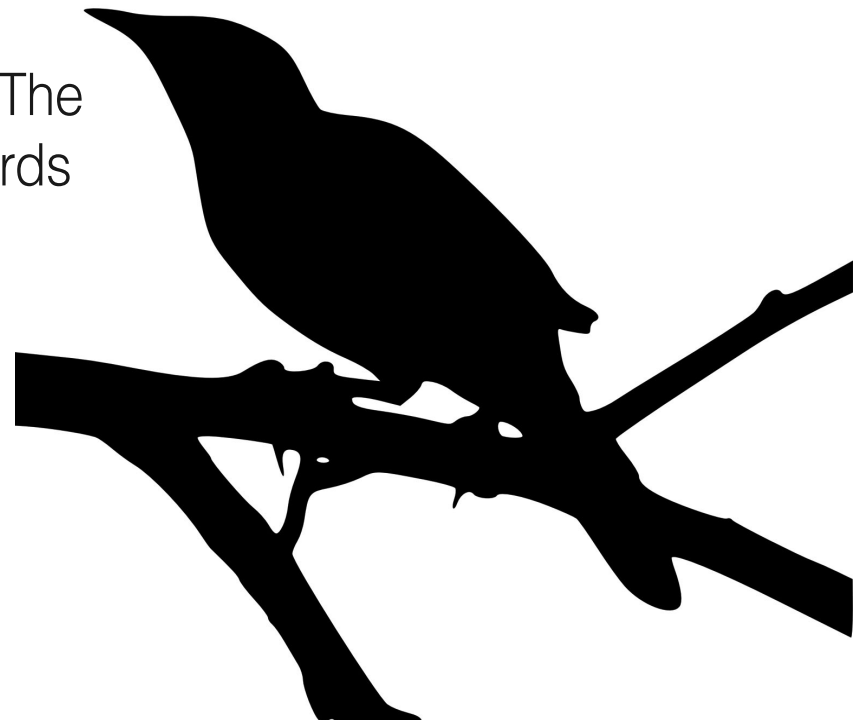
She referred to a 2013 study investigating habitat loss and pesticide use in addition to farming intensity. Lead investigator Dr. Pierre Mineau, a Canadian toxicologist, found that while habitat loss has greatly reduced bird numbers, pesticide has the potential to drive what species are left to local extinction.

Mineau pointed specifically to states with high use of toxic pesticides known to be lethal to birds. Nebraska was among the seven states with the greatest number of declining bird species, tying for third place with five other states, all with nine species of grassland birds experiencing severe population decline. The leading states for population loss were Minnesota and Wisconsin.

The bird species with the greatest population loss were the Eastern Meadowlark, the Grasshopper Sparrow, the Horned Lark, the Ring-necked Pheasant and the Vesper Sparrow.

"We need to start paying a lot more attention to the use of pesticides if we want to reverse, halt or simply slow the very significant downward trend in grassland bird populations," Mineau said.

At the time of the study, ABC was particularly concerned about neonicotinoid insecticides, which have since been



found to be connected to the Colony Collapse Disorder epidemic deaths affecting honey bees and other widespread declines in beneficial insects.

"A single corn kernel coated with a neonicotinoid can kill a songbird," Palmer said. "Even a tiny grain of wheat treated with the oldest neonicotinoid, imidacloprid, can fatally poison a bird. And as little as one-tenth of a neonicotinoid-coated corn seed per day during egg-laying season is all that is needed to affect reproduction."

She called the popular neonicotinoid class of pesticides to be a "significant environmental concern" within and beyond bird ecosystems. Indeed, it wasn't so much the bird species decline that set off environmental alarms but the pesticide's effect on honey bees, which are not even a native bee species here, though local native bee species have been affected just as much.

In response, the leading manufacturer of neonicotinoid pesticides Bayer CropScience initiated a Bee Care program and a Farming Forward project, which is meant to naturally attract pollinating insects to field borders.

"It seems that everyone is looking for just one culprit for reduced bee health and colony losses, but you can't point the finger of blame at a single factor," said Annette Schurmann, director of the Bayer Bee Care Centers in Monheim, Germany, and Clayton, N.C. "Bees are facing multiple challenges."

Though Bayer CropScience isn't taking responsibility for pollinator deaths through the use of its pesticide, and

while not specific to birds, these types of programs have the potential to make a positive impact on insect-eating pollinators, which include not only birds but also bats.

But it's up to consumers, more than governmental programs, to put the pressure on industry to develop these programs and continue them.

"Until the next asteroid slams into the planet, its people that will dictate the future course of all known life in the universe," said Gretchen Daily, director of Stanford University's Center for Conservation Biology in Stanford, Calif. "On our own watch, this 100-year span, we're projecting that half of all plants and animals that were on the planet before humanity became a big force will go extinct. Whatever survives really is a function of our activities. I just find it stunning to think about how dramatic the changes are that we're bringing about."

Many organizations have called songbird population declines the canary-in-the-mine warning for humankind, and ABC founder George Fenwick is hoping that this helps people to stop thinking about bird conservation as an unneeded luxury and to start thinking about birds' value in real economic terms.

"Protecting and helping birds is not only the right thing to do, it is also good for the economy and the future of our environment," he said. "Birds are invaluable as controllers of insect pests, as pollinators of crops and dispersers of native plant seed."

Sign Up For Free BQA Certification Training

BROOKINGS — Livestock producers take pride in selling safe and wholesome products. Through Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) certification programs cattle and dairymen are able to inform consumers of their efforts to implement and maintain best management practices that minimize defects or residues in beef and dairy products, explained Heidi Carroll, SDSU Extension Livestock Stewardship Extension Associate.

"The broad range of topics covered in order to receive BQA Certification shows consumers that livestock producers are committed to being responsible stewards of the animals they raise and conscientious of the safety and quality of the products these animals produce," Carroll said.

FREE BQA TRAINING

Free BQA online certification training modules, offered through the Kansas State Beef Cattle Institute, are available in October to livestock producers through a sponsorship by Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica Inc. This online training will complete Level 1 BQA training for S.D. producers.

To access the BQA online training, visit <http://BQA.org/team>. These online modules contain slide shows and video footage on many topics presented by industry experts on livestock handling and husbandry practices, Carroll explained. "What is great about these online modules is that livestock producers can work at their own

pace and schedule, and once you start a module, you can leave and come back starting at where you left off" she said.

Upon completion of the online training, South Dakota livestock producers can work with the S.D. Beef Industry Council to develop, or update a Site Plan and Treatment Plan for their operation. Once these plans are completed and approved, Carroll said the producer will receive their Level 2

BQA certification.

In South Dakota, Level 2 BQA certification is required in order for livestock producers to market their calves as such.

For more information on any aspect of the BQA certification process or Level 2 BQA certification, contact Carroll at 605-688-6623 heidi.carroll@sdstate.edu.

To learn more, visit iGrow.org.

65th Anniversary Celebration



Mr. and Mrs. Schaefer

John and Donna Schaefer of Yankton, SD, will celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary on October 15, 2014.

They have four children, 14 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren. Their family requests a card shower. Greetings may be sent to 2820 Mary St., Yankton, SD, 57078.

50th Anniversary Celebration



Mr. & Mrs. Hynes

Michael (Pete) and Marlene Hynes will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on October 20, 2014.

Marlene (Kathol) and Michael Hynes were married on October 20, 1964, at St. Rose in Crofton, NE.

They will celebrate with their children: Michelle Hynes of Dakota City, NE; Kevin (Lisa) Hynes of Murdock, NE; Collin Hynes of Bloomfield, NE; Brian (Stephanie) Hynes of Louisville, NE; and Kimberly (Tim) Renken of Alcester, SD.

The couple has 12 grandchildren.

Their family requests a card shower. Greetings may be sent to Box 134, Crofton, NE, 68730.

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