

Leddy, K.L., K.F. Higgins, and D.E. Naugle. 1999. Effects of Wind Turbines on Upland Nesting Birds in Conservation Reserve Program Grasslands. *Wilson Bulletin* 111:100-104

Abstract: Grassland passerines were surveyed during summer 1995 on the Buffalo Ridge Wind Resource Area in southwestern Minnesota to determine the relative influence of wind turbines on overall densities of upland nesting birds in conservation Reserve Program (CRP) grasslands. Birds were surveyed along 40 m fixed width transects that were placed along wind turbine strings within three CRO fields and in three CRP fields without turbines. Conservation Reserve Program grasslands without turbines and areas located 180 m from turbines supported higher densities (261.0-312.5 males/100 ha) of grassland birds than areas within 80 m of turbines (58.2-128.0 males/100 ha). Human disturbance, turbine noise, and physical movements of turbines during operation may have disturbed nesting birds. We recommend that wind turbines be placed within cropland habitats that support lower densities of grassland passerines than those found in CRP grasslands.