Cooper, J.M. and S.M. Beauchesne. 2004. Does the Wind Power Industry Threaten Marbled Murrelets or Do Marbled Murrelets Threaten the Wind Power Industry? Pg. 1-14. *In:* T.D. Hooper, editor. Proceedings of the Species at Risk 2004 Pathways to Recovery Conference. 1 March 2–6, 2004, Victoria, B.C. Species at Risk 2004 Pathways to Recovery Conference Organizing Committee, Victoria, B.C.

Abstract: Green energy is being promoted by governments, industry, and environmentalists as a method of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and slowing global warming. Wind-based power is a rapidly growing area of green energy production throughout the world as improved turbine technology and green energy credits continue to lower costs of wind-based energy production. In Canada, wind farm projects exist in several provinces. No wind farms have been constructed in British Columbia, but dozens of projects are currently proposed. About 40 wind farms are projected to be built in British Columbia in the near future. Proposed and potential projects span the length of the coast, and could result in several thousand wind turbines being built on at-sea and inland sites.

The risk of bird mortality from collisions with wind turbines receives the most attention of all potential impacts associated with wind farms. Collision mortality is a cause of concern for the general public and government, even though most studies indicate that bird mortality rates are very low. In British Columbia, the threatened marbled murrelet (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*) is the highest profile bird species with a potential to be impacted by coastal wind farms. Due to the behavior, timing, location, and frequency of its flight patterns, the marbled murrelet could be at risk of colliding with wind turbines if they are located within the species' flight paths.

Developing sources of green energy and conserving marbled murrelet populations are both priorities for Environment Canada. Almost all farms proposed for coastal British Columbia seem to have potential to kill marbled murrelets. Can the wind power industry proceed to develop the wind-based energy potential of coastal British Columbia and avoid conflicts with marbled murrelet conservation, or will conservation concerns for marbled murrelets slow or stop development of the wind power industry? Both sides of this issue are discussed, and general mitigation measures are suggested.