

Fact File

Do the wind turbines harm birds?

Before work commenced on the Huron Wind site, the project was thoroughly reviewed to ensure there would be no more than a minimal effect on the local bird population. The review included a report from an independent, local ornithologist who studied the site as well as the historical bird population. The report is included in the Environmental Screening review. (See Fact File: Environmental Screening.)

Birds in the area include waterfowls, gulls, migrating raptors, wintering raptors, open country songbirds and woodland songbirds. Bald Eagles also have a winter roost in the woodlots north of the Huron Wind site.

The main migration corridors for local birds are the open waters of Lake Huron, about two kilometres west of Huron Wind, and the nearby Huron Fringe woodland. As part of an Environmental Assessment screening process, birds in these areas were considered in relevance to the Huron Wind site. Several studies involving birds and other wind farms in North America were also reviewed.

A 600-kilowatt wind turbine operated by Ontario Power Generation has been in service on the Huron Wind property since 1995 and has experienced only one bird-fatality, believed to have happened during a thunderstorm. Any additional findings at the Huron Wind project will be reviewed to ensure the correctness of the initial report in the Environmental Screening.

In conclusion, it can be said that existing power transmission lines, nearby glass structures, automobiles and pet cats are much more hazardous to birds than the wind turbines at Huron Wind.

Huron Wind is located south of MacGregor Point Provincial Park, the location of the annual Huron Fringe Birding Festival. For information about the festival, please visit www.friendsofmacgregor.org.