

Agenda Item 3: Hawaiian Hoary Bat Guidance Document

Questions I have related to the Hawaiian Hoary Bat Draft Guidance Document:

1. The Hawaiian Hoary Bat (HHB) has been listed as an endangered species since 1970. It's population remains unknown (ESRC & DOFAW, 2024.). What solid evidence is the department aware of that confirms continued taking of the HHB has no impact to the remaining population? Can you please share this information and include it in the document?
2. Has the department reviewed any evidence pertaining to how wind turbines are contributing to the committees and if they are working as intended? If so can the department please share specifics?
3. On what basis does the department determine the requested amount of taking is too much or too little if the population of the HHB remains unknown?
4. Has the department considered making a demand on wind turbine companies to find other ways that no longer involve taking endangered species from what is left of their habitat? If not, why?

“Increasing development of wind energy facilities has led to hundreds of thousands of bats killed each year nationwide due to collisions with wind turbines. As a result, wind power has become a significant threat to the continued survival of these species” (ESRC & DOFAW, 2024.)

5. The Department recognizes this however the department continues to recommend and/or approve take request. Why?
6. Slightly off topic, but somewhat relevant, has the department reviewed the impacts from wind turbine waste after they breakdown after approximately ten years? Where this waste gets stored, if exposed to the environment, how this impacts species seeking food and potentially mistaking fiberglass components as a food resource (possibly the HHB). If this issue has not been reviewed, is it something that can be?
7. The goals, objectives, habitat issues the HHB continues to struggle with, sampling and monitoring appear to be duplicative of what has been included in past guidance documents related to the HHB, which indicates things are either staying the same or getting worse, as there is no evidence their species has improved, and no end in sight for wind turbine companies to be given this species to kill. At what point do requests for taking the HHB be rejected?

Thank you for answering the questions.

J.G.

REFERENCES

ESRC & DOFAW. 2024. Hawaiian Hoary Bat Guidance for Wind Energy Project Habitat Conservation Plans, Third Edition. Endangered Species Recovery Committee and Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife, Honolulu, Hawaii. XX pages. page 10