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2015 SEP 14 P 12: 07

FEDERAL ENERGY
REGULATORY COMMISSION

August 31, 2015
Ms. Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20426

Re: Docket No. PF15-1-000

PennEast Pipeline Project: Resource Report 3 - Pre-Filing Draft, dated April 2015

Dear Ms. Bose:

 ORIGINAL

Washington Crossing Audubon Society (WCAS) endorses the letter by Emile Devito Ph.D. of the New Jersey Conservation Foundation (NJCF) that critiques *PennEast's Resource Report #3 Pre-filing April 2015*. WCAS shares NJCF's concern that the bioinventories scheduled for the spring of 2016 will be inadequate to document the rich complexities of the flora and fauna in the area affected by the proposed PennEast pipeline. Multiple visits throughout the year are necessary to fully document the biodiversity of the affected properties. To collect accurate data for each taxa, the visits need to be timed to the life cycles of the organisms involved. For example, spring ephemerals should be surveyed in the early spring when they are in bloom but breeding Nearctic-Neotropical Warblers should be tallied when the maximum number of males are singing on territory, the second half of May for most species.

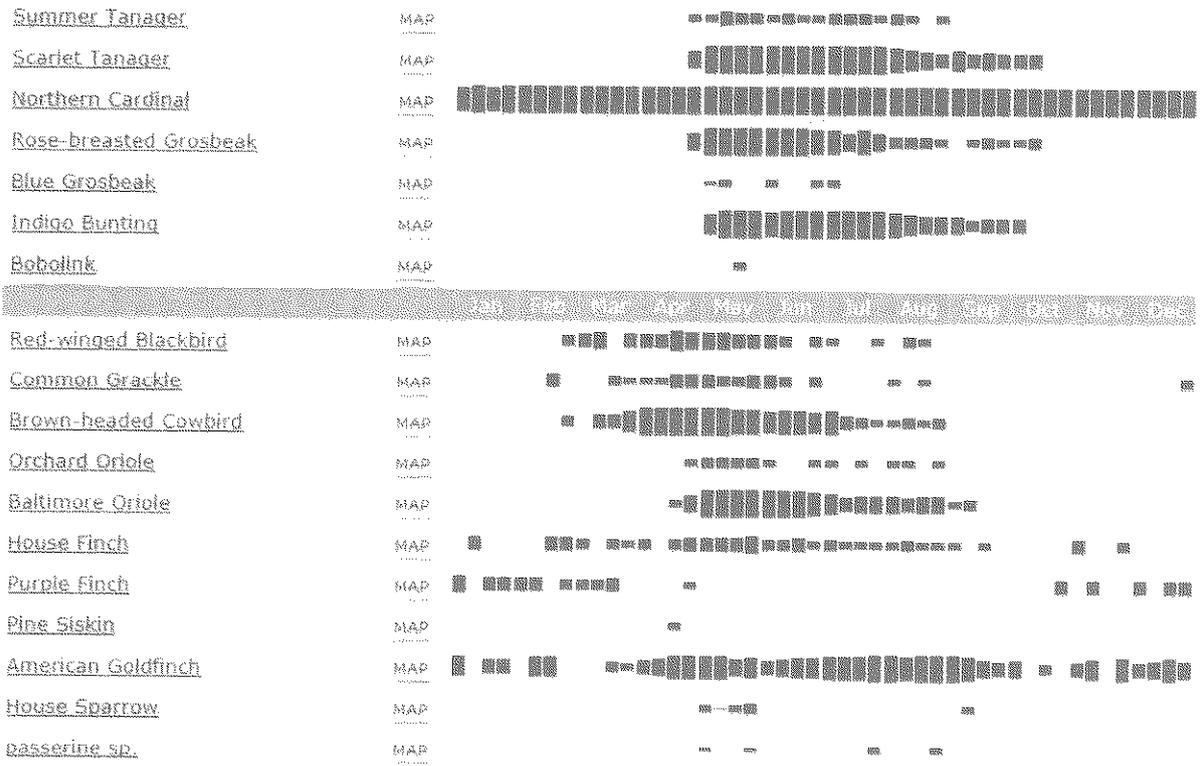
The following data from the eBird records of the Ted Stiles Nature Preserve at Baldpate Mountain Important Bird Area illustrates our concern that a brief survey will be inadequate. The bar graph shows changes in the relative concentration of each species during the year. It is clear from the data that the timing of the biosurvey must coincide with the peak of breeding season to avoid underestimating the number of breeding birds and that spring and fall migration are spread out over several weeks with different species peaking at different times. The line graphs for individual species show the complexity of counting birds. The eBird data from Baldpate include the results of a systematic breeding bird mapping study in May and June from 2008 through 2015. A description of the study and a table of the results follow the eBird generated bar graph and line graphs.

Because of this complexity, large data bases like eBird are more accurate in showing bird numbers in well birded areas than brief, infrequent, and possibly ill-timed biosurveys. Any

<u>Red-tailed Hawk</u>	MAP	
<u>Killdeer</u>	MAP	
<u>Spotted Sandpiper</u>	MAP	
<u>Least Sandpiper</u>	MAP	
<u>American Woodcock</u>	MAP	
<u>Laughing Gull</u>	MAP	
<u>Ring-billed Gull</u>	MAP	
<u>Herring Gull</u>	MAP	

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<u>Rock Pigeon</u>	MAP												
<u>Mourning Dove</u>	MAP												
<u>Yellow-billed Cuckoo</u>	MAP												
<u>Black-billed Cuckoo</u>	MAP												
<u>Eastern Screech-Owl</u>	MAP												
<u>Great Horned Owl</u>	MAP												
<u>Barred Owl</u>	MAP												
<u>Northern Saw-whet Owl</u>	MAP												
<u>Common Nighthawk</u>	MAP												
<u>Chimney Swift</u>	MAP												
<u>Ruby-throated Hummingbird</u>	MAP												
<u>Belted Kingfisher</u>	MAP												
<u>Red-headed Woodpecker</u>	MAP												
<u>Red-bellied Woodpecker</u>	MAP												
<u>Yellow-bellied Sapsucker</u>	MAP												

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<u>Downy Woodpecker</u>	MAP												
<u>Hairy Woodpecker</u>	MAP												
<u>Northern Flicker</u>	MAP												
<u>Pileated Woodpecker</u>	MAP												
<u>American Kestrel</u>	MAP												
<u>Merlin</u>	MAP												
<u>Peregrine Falcon</u>	MAP												
<u>Olive-sided Flycatcher</u>	MAP												
<u>Eastern Wood-Pewee</u>	MAP												
<u>Yellow-bellied Flycatcher</u>	MAP												
<u>Acadian Flycatcher</u>	MAP												



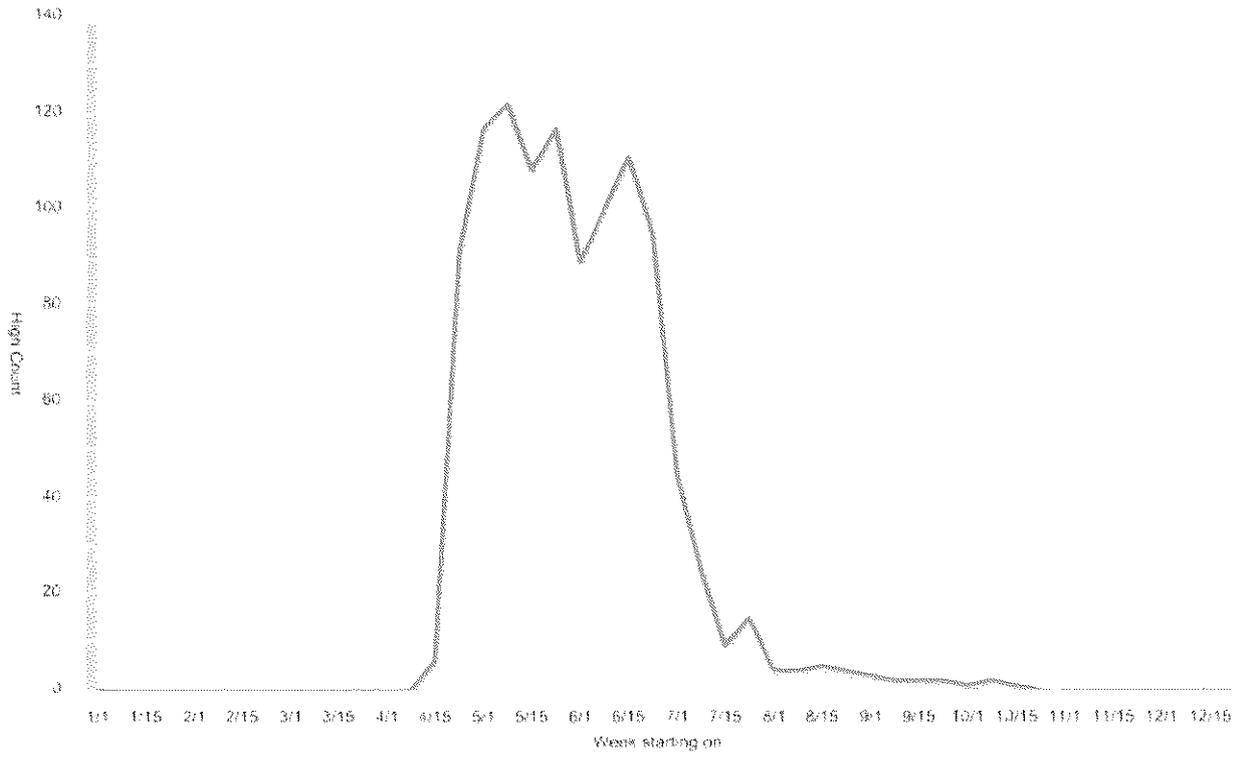
KEY: | = insufficient data |  = rare to widespread

[Download Histogram Data](#)

On August 20, 2015, generated from:

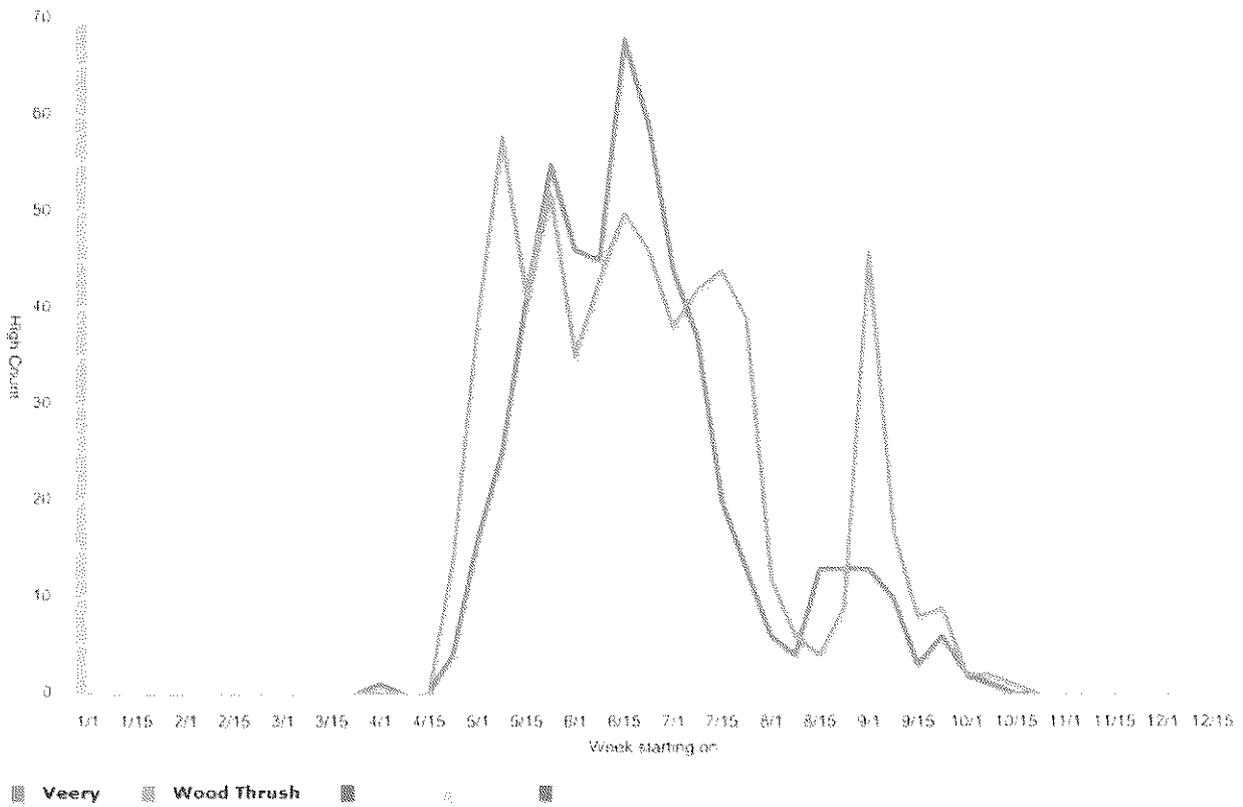
<http://ebird.org/ebird/GuideMe?step=saveChoices&getLocations=hotspots&parentState=US-NJ&bMonth=01&bYear=1900&eMonth=12&eYear=2015&reportType=location&hotspots=L200757&continue.x=25&continue.y=15>

Most numerous breeder in interior forest at Baldpate: Ovenbird

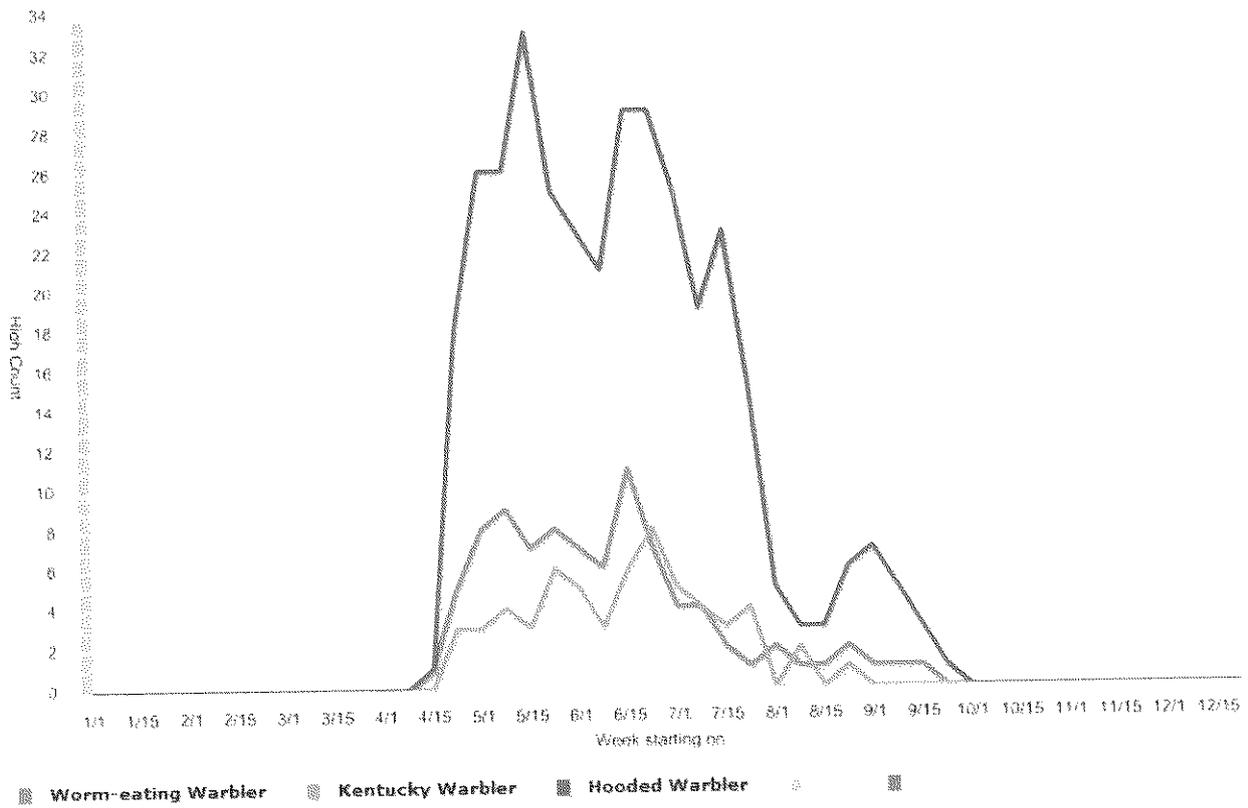


■ Ovenbird ■ ■ ● ■

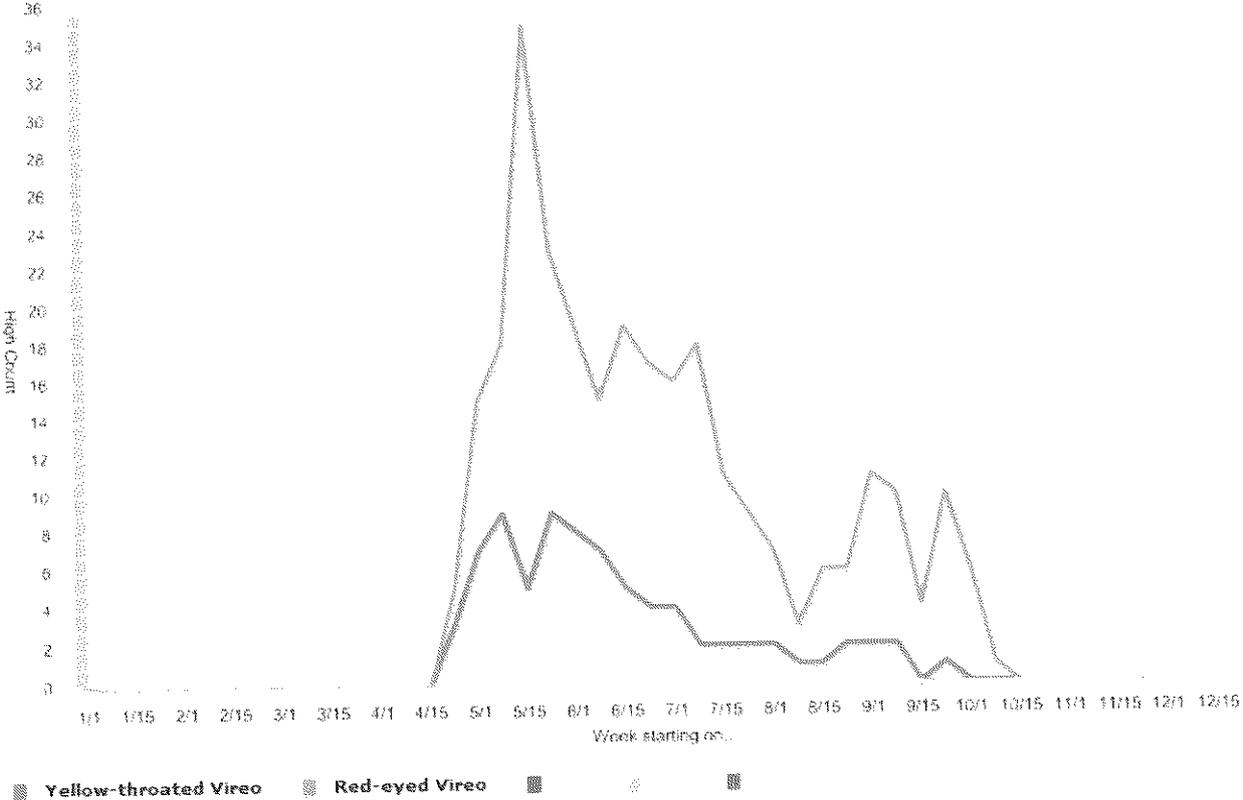
New Jersey Species of Special Concern breeding in interior forest at Baldpate: Wood Thrush and Veery



New Jersey Species of Special Concern breeding in interior forest at Baldpate: Hooded, Kentucky and Worm-eating Warblers:



Interior Forest Breeders at Baldpate: Yellow-throated and Red-eyed Vireo:



Breeding Territories of Nearctic-Neotropical Migrants at Baldpate Mountain 2008-2015

Species	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	2	1	1		1	0		1
Chimney Swift								1
Eastern Wood-Pewee	32	16	27	33	28	18	18	13
Eastern Phoebe	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1
Great-crested Flycatcher	2	3	1	1	2	0	1	0
Red-eyed Vireo	14	10	18	21	17	27	24	12
White-eyed Vireo	3	2	1	10	5	2	5	4
Yellow-throated Vireo	1	4	6	2	7	5	4	7
House Wren	1	1	1		2	3	1	4
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher		2		1	2	0	3	2
Wood Thrush	34	34	58	58	60	54	68	67
Veery	57	41	57	68	54	44	60	42
Gray Catbird	32	23	45	53	53	46	61	37
Blue-winged Warbler	7	3	8	12	8	11	5	14
Yellow Warbler	4	3	5	8	8	8	5	3
Chestnut-sided Warbler	10	8	7	14	10	7	10	11
Prairie Warbler	3	2	2	1	0	3	2	2
Pine Warbler	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Worm-eating Warbler	4	5	11	7	7	8	5	7
Black-and-white Warbler	5	6	9	14	16	14	17	27
American Redstart	2	2	4	5	5	6	8	10
Ovenbird	107	116	130	133	115	129	132	130
Louisiana Waterthrush					1	1	1	1
Kentucky Warbler	4	7	10	10	3	3	2	1
Common Yellowthroat	58	30	40	70	51	51	50	68
Hooded warbler	32	29	38	30	29	19	30	21
Yellow-breasted Chat		1						0
Summer Tanager					1	1	1	1
Scarlet Tanager	15	15	24	29	26	25	32	17
Rose-breasted Grosbeak		5	4	4	7	8	11	12
Indigo Bunting	10	9	17	16	21	14	6	9
Eastern Towhee	52	24	37	46	40	41	46	38
Baltimore Oriole	7	8	13	13	10	11	12	9

Breeding territories determined by males singing on territory three or more times.
 In 2015 a second Kentucky Warbler sang once on territory where Kentucky Warblers were confirmed breeding in 2014.

Baldpate Mountain Breeding Study Notes

Survey: Each route was surveyed a minimum of six times between May and early July. In addition, Pine Warbler and Louisiana Waterthrush breeding sites were surveyed in April since these species start and finish the breeding cycle early. Data from Baldpate and Fiddler's Creek routes were combined. Baldpate was surveyed in two routes because it was not possible to cover the four high quality habitats in one morning.

Breeding territories were determined by a male singing on territory at least three times.

Routes:

2008-2015 Baldpate:

Straight trail from Pleasant Valley parking lot to connector trail to North-east paths. Return to White Trail. Ridge Trail (White Trail) from Pleasant Valley Road parking lot to intersection at low point in the trail. Right trail to connector trail to power line. Return to Ridge Trail. Ridge Trail to old logging trail /horse trail going from tenant farm to power line & return by Northwest Trail (new white trail 2008); Red Trail (North-west loop); return on Ridge Trail (White Trail) from pine windrow to parking lot.

Approximately 6 miles loop including three high quality spicebush thicket areas.

2006 & 2007 Baldpate: Excludes the return by the Northwest Trail (new white trail), built in 2008. No high quality Spicebush thickets are found along this trail. 2006 & 2007 are excluded from charts because of route change,

2008-2015 Fiddler's Creek Baldpate: Summit Trail from Fiddler's Creek parking lot; loop around summit; return by road.

Approximately 2.3 miles loop including high quality spicebush thicket adjacent to trail and road.

Species: The primary study species are the Nearctic-Neotropical migrant species that breed in the greater Sourland Mountain ecosystem. Warbler species that winter in the Southern states and the Eastern Towhee are included. Year round residents are not included since they are undercounted in the May thorough early July timeframe. Surveying woodpeckers by this method is compromised because males don't sing but both sexes call.