

Chris Henkel

From: Debra Carey [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, August 31, 2011 2:55 PM
To: Chris Henkel
Subject: wind power projects

It's certain that no one can say, unequivocally, that wind turbines are wholly benign or wholly dangerous. We do not have the luxury of years of data collection, investigation, and experience to assist the Zoning Committee in making decisions for the good of Lee County. Thus said, it may be wise to drive slowly when one cannot see around a curve. Especially when you are transporting not only yourself, but every person living in our community, into a new and different era. The Bloomington moraine, which travels through our county, is a natural resource and just as soil, water, air and mineral resources, the moraine should be protected and wisely used for the benefit of our citizens.

I can say through personal experience with the Big Sky Wind Project that I was naive in negotiating a one-half mile setback for Ryan Wetland and Sand Prairie which is owned by the Lee County Soil & Water Conservation District. Acoustic habitat fragmentation studies at Cornell University, New York, are just now in the beginning stages but several years ago, when we were in discussion with Big Sky, we did not even recognize terms such as acoustic habitat fragmentation, sound and ground vibration, and shadow flicker. Again, from personal experience, noise intrusion is very evident on a daily basis on the Ryan reserve. Shadow flicker occurs at certain times. We, and everyone else, are still inexperienced in recognizing possible negative impacts and possible benefits associated with this new technology.

Several weeks ago MainStream Wind Project personnel knocked on my door on a Saturday morning, complete with papers in hand for me to sign for an underground transmission line on my farm, my sister's and my father's farms. I suggested, instead of the cash payment offered, using mitigation for possible impacts, very much like the Illinois Department of Transportation, and private contractors are required to do when impacting wetlands. If IDOT or a contractor fills in a wetland, they must purchase or build another wetland. The mitigation process is a tried and true method to optimize a project economically while providing benefits to the entire community. Mitigation can expedite projects of any type.

I have concerns with what MainStream personnel told me about the proposed Green River Wind Farm; the turbine setback is to be 1 mile from Green River State Wildlife Area, but from personal experience with the Ryan reserve, turbines located even 1 mile from the preserve have a negative acoustic impact. As I understand, there is no current ordinance in our county requiring such a setback from a natural area. Nor is there any current ordinance requiring environmental studies and surveys of endangered and threatened species that would provide solid data for future projects; there is no procedure in place when a wind turbine company comes across an endangered or threatened species; and there is no mitigation process attached to such a project to recompense Lee County citizens for the utilization of natural resources by private companies. A written and approved ordinance addressing these issues would be beneficial.

On-going, meaningful and science-based interaction between natural resource professionals, county officials and wind company personnel is critical and will make or break the progress of wind power in our county. I do not wish to stop progress - I wish for progress in our county to proceed in an orderly manner using all available scientific data. If the benefits are high

and negative impacts unavoidable, then mitigation is a proven method. Mitigation will quell litigation.

Most sincerely,
Deb Carey