

Testimony in Support of the Crocker Wind Farm

SD PUC Public Hearing

September 13th, 2017

Name:

Address:

Phone

Dear South Dakota Public Utility Commissioners,

My name is JEFF MITCHELL.

Write out your testimony and include your thoughts on the following.

1. Share your connection with the project:
  - a. Example: I am a 'Landowner, Community Member, Supporter, etc.' in the Crocker wind farm project
  
2. Share your top reasons for supporting the project and give your personal story.
  - a.
  - b.

In conclusion, I ask for your approval of the Crocker Wind Farm Permit.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Citizens of Clark County,

I have been following the recent negative wind farm articles. Coming from a landowner with a family that currently lives and farms in a wind farm developed by Geronimo Energy, I can tell you that the articles include a lot of scare tactics and in cattleman's terms "BS". I am writing this because other landowners have called me asking about my experience and I want to set the record straight based on my real-life experience. I live inside of the Courtenay Wind Farm in North Dakota. There are 15 towers around my farmstead including some on neighbor's land. Being grain and livestock producers, our most valuable asset is our land and maintaining its productivity and value is paramount. My son will be the 5<sup>th</sup> generation to farm and ranch here and <sup>we enjoy</sup> hunting. The Courtenay Wind Farm has had ABSOLUTELY no effect on our wildlife numbers, white tails, geese and ducks all here as before. Our cattle graze the same as before turbines, again NO EFFECTS! The decision to lease for Turbines was not taken lightly but in hindsight – we made one of the best decisions signing a wind lease with Geronimo Energy. They worked with us for years on the development and they followed through on their commitments.

*IN THE SHADOW OF TOWERS*

The project has been a welcomed addition to our farm and the community. They're harmless. Yes - the skyline and landscape view has changed, but it also changed with additions of power lines, paved roads, interstate highways, railroads, oil wells, cell phone towers and the list goes on and on. Now that they are up and running they are just another one of the progressive improvements here, like those listed above. We farm the land just like we always have but now we have better access roads to get in and out of the fields.

With the current unpredictability of weather and commodity markets, the income is a life saver. A dairy man from southern Minnesota told me the income helped pay the mortgage and he has never regretted his decision. The chance to add income producing ability with so little investment on existing land does not happen very often. Our community has also benefited with: new families making a living working for the wind farm, huge new tax revenue, and a new community fund that is about to receive its first annual donation of \$40,000 from Geronimo Energy with many more to come.

*WITHIN THE WIND WAS \$110.00*

Take it from somebody who's seen it first hand: there are always people who will object to something new, but you want a wind farm in your rural community if you can get it. If you want to talk to me directly, just call me on my cell phone - [REDACTED]. Come on up and take a tour around and see for yourself. It's one of the best things you'll do for yourself and your community.

Jeff Mitchell

Courtenay Wind Farm Landowner