

Wind farms create opportunities in North Dakota

By JEFF MITCHELL, Courtenay Wind Farm Landowners • September 12, 2017

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 its paramount. My son will be the 5th generation to farm and ranch here and we enjoy hunting. The Courtenay Wind Farm has ABSOLUTELY no effect on our wildlife numbers, white tails, geese and ducks all here as before. Our cattle graze the same as before the 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.

COURTENAY WIND FARM

The Courtenay Wind Farm is an operational 200 MW wind farm project in Stutsman County, North Dakota. The project was developed by Geronimo Energy and sold to Xcel Energy, who currently owns and operates the project. The Courtenay Wind Farm's footprint spans over 20,000 acres and provides significant economic impact for its host communities in the form of tax revenue, landowner payments and charitable giving.

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.

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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.

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.

Jeff Mitchell is a landowner of Courtenay Wind Farm

