



August 29, 2008

## **SALINE COUNTY WIND FARM GROUP ORGANIZES**

About 50 landowners listened to a speaker from Minnesota from the Renewable Energy Systems (RES) Americas Inc. last week at Saline Center. David Capek, a Saline County farmer in the Atlanta precinct, offered an idea to form a Saline County Wind Association. So on the same night Obama was giving his speech, Saline County landowners were caucusing by precinct forming the beginnings of a Saline County Wind Association.

The idea of having a group is a good one for several reasons if landowners in the County want to pursue a commercial wind turbine farm. 1) The ownership structure of land in Saline County is fractured and multiple making it difficult for project developments. 2) Certain public officials are warning landowners to proceed with caution before signing long-term wind easements and commercial wind farm royalty agreements. 3) Wind Energy Development Company(ies) are and may continue to be interested in the development of a wind energy project in Saline County. Facilitating information and communication between the various landowners and the development company(ies) would be made efficient by the establishment of a landowners association dedicated to transmitting information to and between the various landowners and the company(ies).

The goal of the new Saline County Wind Association representatives will communicate wishes and concerns of landowners and have authority to secure legal counsel and work with counsel to formulate an easement contract agreeable to a super majority of landowners and company. RES Americas is asking for input from the community as a whole.

Precincts that might be targeted for wind turbine land options in the future are Turkey Creek, Monroe, Pleasant Hill, Atlanta, North Fork and Brush Creek. The Saline County Wind Association has the big responsibility of keeping the communication channels open with area landowners, hiring professional counsel, receive and account for any county economic development dollars, erase the every man or woman to yourself mentality if a project is proposed for development and studying the wind turbine property right issues, liability issues, and the changing market on wind turbine royalties. The group can also study the issue of any local C-Bed model investment strategies. It is a big task but there is already a good core group studying the issues.

At the meeting at Saline Center, the following landowners would vote to start the organization. Atlanta - Dave Vavra; Turkey Creek - Daryl Hayek; Monroe - Daryl Peterson; North Fork - Doug Horak; Brush Creek - Doris Broz; and Pleasant Hill - TBA. Three at-large-members are needed, one from Crete, one in Wilber, and one in the Friend area.

There is an outstanding educational session archived on the Internet from Iowa State University Extension for landowner issues to consider before signing a wind easement document. This information is from the ISU Attorney for Law and Taxation - Legal Issues for Landowners with Wind Turbine Development: <http://connect.extension.iastate.edu/p46287410/>



Another useful resource available entitled, “Those Pesky Wind Turbine Contracts: Important Questions,” can also be found at: <http://www.windaction.org/articles/17312>

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