

February 15, 2019

My name is Doug Wertenberger. I am a native of Sabetha KS located in the North East corner of Nemaha County. What makes my story unique is that in 2000 I moved back home to Sabetha from Kansas City in order to go into business with my family and start a family of my own. My wife and I, moving from a nice home in the middle of Overland Park KS, made the decision to build a small home on 5 acres acquired from my parents on what was once my grandfather's land. We were excited to have a chance to be out of the city and my mother was happy that we would be raising our family close to where her and my dad had recently built their new home. We enjoy very much living in the country and experiencing the benefits of doing so. We enjoyed a great view and other than an occasional vehicle passing by on the county road, the only noise distraction came from an occasional bobwhite or mother cow in search of her calf.

Then at some point in around 2008 conversation began regarding the installation of a wind farm in Nebraska. This Eastern portion of the Flatwater Wind Project would be directly across the state line from where we live and close to land my parents owned in Nebraska. Our family was not interested in putting turbines on our land due to concerns of having them close to our homes. Then as neighbors decided to add them to land that was located even closer to our homes than where turbines would be located if they were on our land, the decision was made to sign up the land owned in Nebraska. It was not long, approximately 2 years, before we were living 1.17 miles from the closest of (40) 400' tall 1.5 MW industrial wind turbines. Two of these turbines ended up on by parent's land, but the closest turbine is 6/10th of a mile from their house and is not located on their land.

I am not sure how long the entire installation lasted, but in a relatively short period of time our view to the North of our house was changed drastically. We no longer overlooked rolling flint hills and trees, we now had rolling flint hills with turbines. Life continued, although it did help that my family was profiting from the change in scenery it was not exactly what we had been looking for when we made the move from the city to the country.

With the more than 1-mile distance to the nearest turbine our home is more or less undisturbed. When we are outside and the wind is blowing from the South, as it normally is during the months we spend outside, the noise we hear is kept to a minimum due to, I believe, the wind carrying the noise away. If these turbines were to the South of us this would not be the case. As the turbines age, they seem to be growing increasingly louder. We are very fortunate that we cannot hear the noise inside our home, unless of course the windows are open. When outside and the wind is coming directly at our house from the turbines it is not hard to carry on a conversation over the noise and the distraction, although there, is not overwhelming. When visiting my parent's home, the experience is similar except the noise is even more profound. From inside their home unless the windows are open, you cannot hear the turbines. When outside we spend most of our time on the side of the house that is not directly exposed to the sound. Just to be clear, both of our homes are located South of the existing wind farm and there are no turbines South of us.

In 2012 there was a push made to extend South into Kansas. I did not get involved with the discussion of this project because I was not even aware that it happened. We thought that the turbines North of us would be as close to us as any would ever be, I had no idea there would ever be a possibility that anyone would think of putting them closer to a residence than these already were.

In 2014 my wife and I started the decision process to determine if we were willing to make a sizable investment in the home we had built. Due to the addition of 3 more people to our household over the years, we had outgrown the small living quarters built for the two of us back in 2000. Had I of been keeping myself informed about the possibility of living in the middle of a group of huge wind turbines, I can assure you that I would not have made this investment.

Then in early 2018, 3 years after the sizable addition to our house, we started getting letters and hearing talk of another project starting in Nemaha County. I was not interested and paid no attention to the letters I received from the wind company because I knew that I would not be putting one on the 80 acres we own due to them being entirely too close to my house. I found out that the neighbors to the South and East of me had intentions of signing the lease. This changed everything in our world.

I started talking to several people in our community and attempting to educate myself on how we were going to be able to defend our property and my family from this intrusion. During these conversations I visited all the residents of Nemaha County that live within 2 miles of the existing Western portion of the Flatwater Project. I was not surprised to find that although some of these neighbors also had wind turbines that they were being compensated for in Nebraska, they did not have any interest in living any closer to them than they currently do. They are very concerned that the value of their property will be drastically affected by the addition of more turbines closer to their homes.

In summary:

- We live 1.17 miles from a wind farm
- Members of my family are lease holders of the existing wind farm and are compensated for that lease.
- We live South of the existing wind farm and therefore are not affected as if we were on the North.
- We have made a sizable investment in our property and are comfortable with that distance and location of the existing wind turbines.
- In speaking to the neighbors around me in the same or similar proximity to the existing turbines it is unanimous, none of us would want to live with a turbine any closer than the 1 plus miles they currently are.
- The existing wind farm is not located in an area that is nearly as populated as our county and special provisions to protect residents should be incorporated.
- I support HB2273 and the setback provisions it provides. These setbacks are consistent with the quality of life we have experienced for the last 8 years and the environment in which we chose to build our home. Anything less would be an intrusion into this home.

Sincerely,

Doug Wertenberger