



NORTHERN LARAMIE RANGE ALLIANCE

The Property-Rights Dilemma: Different Landscapes, Different Choices

Legislative Task Force on Wind Energy
Casper, August 26, 2009

The Northern Laramie Range: Facing Wholesale Industrialization



Industrial wind proposed in the Northern Laramies has triggered immense citizen concern

- 700 Alliance members since May...
- ...nearly 600 petitions explicitly opposing industrial wind and calling for a moratorium
- Successful collaboration with Rocky Mountain Power to reroute Gateway West

Different landscapes, different property-rights issues

- **High plains** (away from towns): large landholdings, homogeneous use, less community involvement - property-rights conflicts less acute - wind associations seem to work
- **Mountains:** Diverse size of holdings, varied use, lots of community use, interest and involvement - the property-rights dilemma is acute

The property-rights dilemma in the mountains

- A landowner doesn't want to be restricted in how she uses her property - by being prevented from signing up with a wind promoter

but

- Her neighbor doesn't want the landowner destroying the value and use of his property, which is the effect of her surrounding him with 400-foot-high turbines and other industrial infrastructure

and

- The community doesn't want its recreational heartland destroyed

Industrial-wind impacts in the mountains can't be mitigated...

In the Northern Laramies, for example:

- Fragmented ownership means there's no room for effective setbacks in a project large enough to attract transmission
- Ridgetop placement means no chance of concealment
- Road network would have to be radically overhauled in rough terrain
- Eminent-domain supported "merchant transmission" required

Bottom line: A mixed-use landscape utterly transformed for the benefit of a few

...but the financial opportunity cost of “no-wind” can be mitigated

- There are public and private programs that pay ranchers to keep ranching (state and federal, WSGALT, TNC, etc.)
- These need **more funding** (from a production tax?)...
- ...and to be **easier to use** (one-stop shopping, more leases as an alternative to perpetual easements)
- Risk-adjusted, they don't do badly against wind

A two-pronged solution:

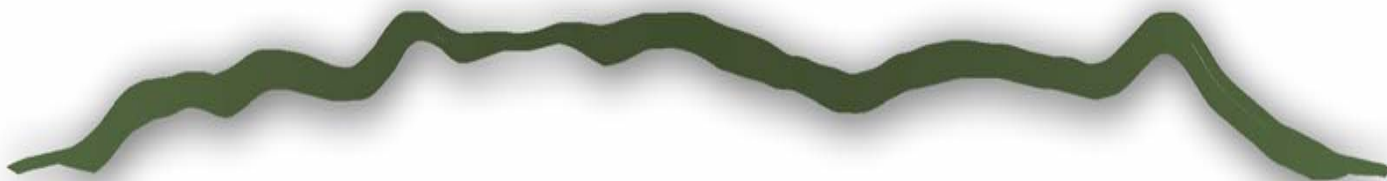
- **County or state action to keep industrial wind out of the mountains**

with
- **Expanded and simplified “conservation finance” programs for ranchers to stay in ranching**

Wyoming is lucky to have choices in siting industrial wind...

- High plains grazing and minerals country good for wind development
- Varied-use mountains and foothills, expensive to develop, subject to intense controversy and where wind development has a high opportunity cost

...so it can save its varied-use mountain country while welcoming wind farms on the plains where they're appropriate



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Scale: some local comparisons

Duke Energy northwest of Glenrock: 10,000 acres for 99 mw of “nameplate” capacity, 66 389-foot turbines

Duke Energy northeast of Glenrock: 17,000 acres for 200 mw of “nameplate” capacity, 130 389-foot turbines

Wasatch Wind south of Glenrock/west of Douglas: 100,000 acres for perhaps 1,500 mw of “nameplate” capacity, 600 425-foot turbines

Scale: Wasatch Wind's "Area of Interest"

