



**Todd Myers addresses the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council
in favor of the Desert Claim Wind Power Project**

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My name is Todd Myers. I'm the Executive Director of WindWorks! Northwest, which is an organization that brings together a variety of different communities to support the responsible siting of wind power in Washington State. You heard a lot about a number of issues, including climate change, the need for jobs, and energy – whether it's growing resources for energy or growing Washington State or energy independence – but I want to add two more concepts to help you along with your decision.

One of them is that when you make a decision, make sure that you're following objective standards, and the second is that when in doubt, honor the property rights of those who are involved with this project and make sure that mutually beneficial transactions are being honored.

In talking about the objective standards, having worked at the Department of Natural Resources and sitting very close to where you are and dealing with these same sorts of issues in forestry, it is interesting to me that many of the same arguments that get made against harvesting a renewable resource like timber are now being made against wind: cumulative effects, viewsheds, those sorts of things. Ultimately scientists deal with these things and they know very well the challenges and they deal with them everyday and you ought to listen to them.

But often appeals are made to very intangible arguments about viewsheds and those sorts of things, and I would encourage you to stick with objective standards because once we get into the subjective standards, it becomes very difficult to have a coherent policy in siting and for your decisions to be consistent from one community to another. Consistency is not only important for the future of energy or a need for any project, but for the rule of law. And so following objective standards, keeping in mind obviously all of the concerns that people have raised, but when push comes to shove, following those objective standards I think is very critical.

Lastly, like I said, I think that you need to follow and honor the property rights. It is important any time you're doing a siting of any plant or doing a timber harvest like DNR that you pay attention to what's going on in the community. But property rights go two directions and while people often feel like they have a right to their view so too do the people who own that property and their right to earn a living on it.

In these cases the farmers and the landowners have made a deal that they believe is

beneficial both to them and the community as a whole. And if you are going to change the rules and tell them that they can't use their property in a particular way, we need to make sure that you have a good reason to overrule those property rights. I could tell you that farmers, foresters, and others who work in natural resources have often been frustrated by what they feel are impacts on their property rights, and many farmers are now turning or looking to turn to wind energy and other sources of revenue as you already heard to make sure that they can continue to keep that land and live on that land and pass it down to the next generation.

So following those two guidelines, making sure your decisions are based on objective standards and when in doubt honoring the property rights, I think you will come to conclude what so many have concluded: that this is a good project. It helps not only those who live on the land but the community as a whole. Thanks.