

North West Renewable
Energy Community

Thursday, 10 February 2011

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

Subject: The Social and Economic Impact of Rural Wind Farms

Dear Sir or Madam,

In response to the request for submissions by the Senate Community Affairs Committee regarding the The Social and Economic Impact of Rural Wind Farms, please find attached below our response.

We represent a group of individuals who are investigating the opportunity for renewable energy projects, including solar and bio energy within our region.

Please find attached the response from our group to Senate Community Affairs Committee findings.

Should you have any questions or wish to discuss our submission further please don't hesitate to contact us

Kind Regards,

Mr Alex Cross and Mr Stephen Kelly

Other Relevant Matters

The Mildura region in North West Victoria is not well known for its wind resources but it is recognised for its solar energy.

According to local data “solar resources provide an annual average 8.6 hours of sunshine per day, 132 clear days per year, and 18.9 MJ/(m*m) in solar exposure per day. (5.3kWh/m2)” [Mildura Development Corporation Website:]

The development of large scale solar projects in the region has put the area in the spotlight as a solar generating capital. For example the Solar Flagships Program and the Solar Systems (Silex) Project.

Our group thinks that the establishment of these projects also brings opportunities for medium scale community lead solar farms and projects.

We realise that 'wind technology' has been significant in the development of community owned energy production in Australia especially, with Hepburn Wind Farms and Mt Barker Community Farm.

What they have achieved in these wind farms, has been pivotal in establishing the community component of the renewable energy industry in Australia.

Our concern is, if the inquiry finds that the negative impacts around rural wind farms are found to be substantiated, that there may be a flow on perception that all community lead projects come with these problems, which we think would be detrimental to development of other localised renewable projects.

We hope that in the future every renewable energy project is assessed individually as to the positive and negative impacts it has on a community and the findings from one inquiry does not establish a precedent that impacts the development of community lead renewable projects into our future.