

Submission to the Senate Inquiry into The Social and Economic Impact of Rural Wind Farms

By David Carr

I wish to make the following submission to the senate inquiry, as a private citizen, in an area soon to be developed as a major wind farm area. I live in Armidale on the Northern Tablelands of NSW. There are more than 1100 development applications pending for wind turbines in the area.

I am strongly in support of wind farms in the region because of their potential to contribute large amounts of electricity from a sustainable and renewable source. The burning of coal to produce electricity causes greenhouse gas pollution (mainly methane and CO₂) which has been shown to increase global temperatures, with potentially catastrophic results for humans, agricultural enterprises and natural environments.

Wind farms are capable of generating large quantities of electricity, suitable for meeting the needs of many consumers. The 70,000 people living on the Northern Tablelands could have all their electricity supplied from around 40 2MW turbines. Wind power represents a real opportunity to meet the Australian Government mandatory renewable energy target of 20% and as such they should be strongly supported by Australian Government policy.

Wind farms are likely to create many jobs for skilled and semi-skilled workers in regional areas, both during construction and operation. These sort of jobs are sorely needed in rural areas.

I personally do not mind the appearance of turbines in the landscape, although I would not like to see them located in National Parks or areas of high ecological value. The wind farm near Bungendore in southern NSW enhances the landscape view.

I do not believe that there is any evidence to show that there are adverse health effects from wind turbines on people living near them.

I believe that the rent paid by turbine owners to land owners provides a valuable alternative enterprise for landholders and is likely to enhance rather than lower property values.

My only concern with wind farms is that, like any development, they should not destroy areas of high conservation value, such as endangered ecological communities. They should also be located after consideration of potential impacts on migratory birds and mammals.

Yours sincerely,

David Carr