

Department of the Senate
P.O Box 6100
Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2600.

Tuesday 1st February, 2011.

Senate Community Affairs Committee Inquiry into The Social and Economic Impact of Rural Wind Farms.

My wife and I along with our son and his family run a farming operation situated on the Fingerboard road at Yambuk. We farm on 500 hectares of land and run beef cattle and prime lambs, we have operated this property since 1973.

Like most people we have become a lot more environmentally aware over the last 15 – 20 years and realize that we have to treat the environment with a lot more care and respect than we have in the past. Fortunately today children are now becoming aware at a young age that we need to be sustainable and that is encouraging.

We have a responsibility to address the problems we have caused and not leave the mess for future generations to deal with.

It was with more than a little interest that we watched, as did the rest of the Yambuk / Codrington and Port Fairy communities, as the first Wind Farm was built in the Yambuk area, 10 years ago.

Since the completion of the Codrington Wind Farm another adjoining Wind Farm has been built in close proximity to Yambuk. The Yambuk Wind Farm has been in operation for 6 years. The two Wind Farms have a total of 37 towers in operation.

At the time there was some concern about the Yambuk Wind Farm being too close to wetlands. Wind Farm companies are taking more care in the location of Wind Farms and this site would probably not have been developed today.

During the planning, construction and operation stage, there was not any heated debate or protests against the building and ongoing operations of the current Wind Farms.

These Wind Farms are accepted by the local communities and are only spoken about in passing interest.

There have been no adverse health effects to local people that we are aware of. Our family interacts with the local community on a daily basis and over the 10 years of operation there has been no mention of headaches, excess noise, sleep deprivation, low frequency noise or shadow flicker. There has been no negative feedback in the Yambuk, Port Fairy or Codrington areas concerning the Wind Farms.

The acceptance of wind farms in the area was clearly demonstrated when the third Wind Farm in the area, known as "Ryan's Corner" was advertised for public consultation. This Wind Farm is probably within 4 km of the township of Yambuk and only drew one objection. The objector did not live in the community and in fact lived 30 km away.

Most people see the need to give "clean" energy sources a chance to develop their technology. Solar, Wind and Hot Rocks are making huge advances in their fields and need to be allowed to prove their clean energy technologies.

If in the future their technology becomes obsolete, Wind Farms and Solar Farms and Geothermal Farms can be dismantled and future generations will not know they even existed. Unlike the damage burning fossil fuels is doing to the environment. This will take generations to pay for in fact the damage may never be negated. Not to mention the damage coal and gas mining is doing to the environment and the landscape. I'm sure people who are living or farming in coal mining and generation areas would much prefer to look at wind towers than the scars to the landscape left by mining coal and the pollution generated by burning it.

While the use of Gas Turbines for electricity is cleaner than coal it certainly isn't "clean" and gas is finite like other fossil fuels.

The decision made by my family 5 years ago to become a stakeholder in the "Ryan Corner" Wind Farm was an easy decision to make. We had already been living with a wind farm operating in the community for 5 years and found the new technology was completely accepted in the area. People want to make a change now instead of handing a mess that we have created on to our children and grand children. People want clean renewable energy.

I have not been involved in any anti or pro wind farm lobbying, but have been dismayed at the miss information that has been used by a small but aggressive number of people to detract from Wind Farms.

A lot of their arguments are the same arguments used against the High Voltage power line constructed in the 1970's from Geelong to the Portland Aluminium Smelter (ALCOA). These arguments in regard to "headaches", "lowering land values", "causing ill health" and others have not been substantiated overtime. Likewise in the ten years of operation the local Wind Farms have not caused headaches, sleep deprivation, anxiety or any other health complaints. Also they have not lowered land values. People along the coast at Port Fairy, Yambuk and Codrington are happy to live with Wind Farms and support them altruistically.

While there are many more arguments supporting Wind Farms, no doubt these will be brought forward by others, I have chosen to highlight the community and local acceptance of the technology. The fact that probably the oldest Wind Farm in Australia has had no health or other implications for local residents and that after 10 years of operation the community is still at ease with Wind Farms and prepared to embrace another one in the Yambuk, Port Fairy, Codrington area.

Mr. Kieron Moore.