

## Siting Fact Sheet

### How Do Wind Developers Decide Where To Build New Projects?

#### Wind Developers Consider The Following:

- **Adequate Wind:** Developers typically review 1-3 years of meteorological data to measure wind speed and consistency at a potential location. This data is collected by meteorological towers built near the project site.
- **Community Support:** The U.S. wind industry works hand-in-hand with communities to build new projects. Developers gain community support through outreach, engagement and transparency. They should encourage public input and involvement early in the planning process. Over 90 percent of Americans living within five miles of a wind project report positive or neutral experiences, according to research from one of America's top national laboratories.
- **Landowner Partners:** Ninety-nine percent of operating wind turbines in the U.S. are located on private land. Developers work with willing landowners on contracts to lease land in exchange for payment.
- **Wildlife And Environmental Studies:** American wind power is proud of its legacy of care for the environment and wildlife. The wind industry works closely with federal and state authorities when selecting sites and developing projects. Developers have to carefully identify and mitigate any potential impacts on land and wildlife. Studies show that wind energy has the lowest impact on wildlife and its surrounding habitat of any large-scale electricity generation facility.
- **Permits:** The wind industry is carefully regulated. Developers must secure proper permits from all levels of government, from local construction and road permits to various permits.
- **Transmission:** Access to adequate and available transmission capacity is essential. Wind developers can avoid costs by using existing transmission when possible and building new infrastructure as needed.
- **A Buyer For The Wind Power:** Developers may secure a buyer for the power a wind project generates. Alternatively, a developer may offer the power into the competitive market as a merchant plant.
- **Financing:** In order to build and operate a wind farm, developers need an investor. These are typically large banks that carefully review the business plan, which helps ensure the project is a good investment.
- **Decommissioning:** Wind turbines have long life cycles, lasting several decades. Typically, before a project is even built, the developer creates a plan for how it will be removed and the land returned to its owner once the project reaches the end of its useful life. ("Project Development," [American Wind Energy Association](#), Accessed 10/16/18)

### National Security Interests Are Also Taken Into Account - The Department Of Defense (DoD) And Other Federal Agencies Review Wind Projects Prior To Construction

**Developers Must Submit An Application To The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) “For A Hazard Determination Prior To Construction.”** “The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has legal jurisdiction over structures over 199 feet tall. Utility scale turbines exceed that height. Therefore, developers must submit an application to the FAA for each turbine for a hazard determination prior to construction.” (“Radar and Airspace,” [American Wind Energy Association](#), Accessed 10/17/18; “Obstruction Evaluation / Airport Airspace Analysis (OE/AAA),” [Federal Aviation Administration](#), Accessed 10/17/18)

**Project Applications Submitted To The FAA Are “Automatically Assigned” To The Department Of Defense (DoD) Siting Clearinghouse For Review.** “The DoD Siting Clearinghouse oversees both formal and informal project review processes. The formal process begins with the referral of a project application submitted for permitting through the Federal Aviation Administration’s Obstruction Evaluation/ Airport Airspace Analysis (OE/AAA) process, which is automatically assigned to the DoD for review.” (“Frequently Asked Questions,” [Department Of Defense Siting Clearinghouse](#), Accessed 10/17/18)

**The DoD Siting Clearinghouse Then Provides Project Information To “Experts In The Various Military Departments And DoD Components” And “Technical And Operational Studies” Are Conducted.** “During formal review processes, the DoD Siting Clearinghouse provides information it receives about the proposed project to experts in the various Military Departments and DoD Components. Then technical and operational studies are conducted and provided to the DoD Siting Clearinghouse. The DoD Siting Clearinghouse submits a single DoD position to the FAA as part of the Obstruction Evaluation/Aiport [sic] Airspace Analysis (OE/AAA) review.” (“Frequently Asked Questions,” [Department Of Defense Siting Clearinghouse](#), Accessed 10/17/18)

**If The DoD Identifies A Concern, Project Developers Work With DoD To Provide Solutions.** “A variety of siting, software and hardware solutions have been implemented to ensure successful coexistence between wind farms and military facilities.” (“Radar and Airspace,” [American Wind Energy Association](#), Accessed 10/17/18)

- **If The DoD Review Discovers An Issue With The Project, They Will “Seek To Mitigate Those Impacts Prior To Submitting A Negative Recommendation To The FAA.”** “If the DoD review finds that a project may pose unacceptable impacts to national security, the DoD Siting Clearinghouse will seek to mitigate those impacts prior to submitting a negative recommendation to the FAA. The proponent will be asked to participate in a partnership with the DoD called a Mitigation Response Team (MRT) to explore potential mitigation options that ensure continued DoD operations, testing, and training as well as energy development.” (“Frequently Asked Questions,” [Department Of Defense Siting Clearinghouse](#), Accessed 10/17/18)

**According The Department Of Defense, Discussions With The Developers “Have Been A Very Effective Means To Mitigate Potential Impacts With Minimal Resources.”** “When DoD determines that a potential wind turbine project may present an adverse impact on military operations and readiness, DoD will offer to enter into discussions with the developer to mitigate the potential impact. These discussions, both formal and informal, between project developers, local governments, and DoD representatives have been a very effective means to mitigate potential impacts with minimal resources. Often, a brief discussion with the applicant resolves DoD’s concerns.” (“Report On The Impact Of Wind Energy Developments On Military Installations,” [Department Of Defense](#), 4/16)

**As Of 2016, The DoD Has Only Formally Objected To One Project; The Project Was “Indefinitely Suspended.” No wind project has ever been built over DoD objections.** “Since 2012, DoD has entered into 39 formal mitigation discussions. In 11 of those cases, DoD entered into extensive discussions with

the applicants that resulted in a signed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to mitigate adverse impacts on military readiness and operations. In one case, the developer chose to withdraw from mitigation discussions, yielding no MOA, and indefinitely suspended the project after DoD formally objected to the project.” (“Report On The Impact Of Wind Energy Developments On Military Installations,” [Department Of Defense](#), 4/16)

### Texas Examples Of Mitigation Include:

- **In 2015, Javelina Wind Project Agreed to Pay \$2.8 Million To Add Additional Radars.**
- **In 2015, Chapman Ranch Wind Project Agreed To Pay \$200,000 To Modify Radars.**
- **In 2014, Baffin Wind Project Agreed To Pay \$80,000 To Modify Radars.**
- **In 2014, Patriot Wind Agreed To Pay \$750,000 To Modify Radar And To Curtail If Necessary.**
- **In 2012, Riviera I Agreed To Pay \$500,000 To Modify Radars And To Curtail If Necessary.** (“Report On The Impact Of Wind Energy Developments On Military Installations,” [Department Of Defense](#), 4/16)

## Existing Texas Policy, Leaving Control To Local Governments, Is Effective And Should Not Be Altered

**Texas Is By Far The Nation’s Wind Energy Leader.** “Texas today is by far the nation’s wind energy leader, accounting for about a fourth of the nation’s installed wind power generating capacity.” (Ryan Maye Handy, “How Texas Became Tops In Wind Power,” [San Antonio Express-News](#), 1/29/18)

**Texas Produces More Wind Energy Than The Next Three States Combined.** “As a state, Texas is by far the No. 1 producer of wind energy in the United States; it produces more wind energy than the next three states combined.” (Ari Shapiro, “Wind Energy Takes Flight In The Heart Of Texas Oil Country,” [NPR](#), 3/8/17)

**The Wind Industry Supports More Than 24,000 Jobs in Texas And Has Provided \$42 Billion In Capital Investment.** “Texas ranks first in the country for both installed and under construction wind capacity, while supporting over 24,000 wind-related jobs. ... The wind energy industry in Texas has provided over \$42 billion in capital investment and has thrived thanks to smart state policy, such as legislation that created Competitive Renewable Energy Zones (CREZ) for wind power transmission.” (“Wind Energy In Texas,” [American Wind Energy Association](#), Accessed 10/17/18)

**This Success Story Is The Result Of Decades Of Conservative Policy From Leaders Like George W. Bush And Rick Perry.** “The groundwork was laid by Bush, who in 1999 signed a major bill that — besides deregulating the electric sector — established a renewable energy requirement that kick-started wind development. But Perry has added to that. In 2005, after bringing renewables onto the agenda during a special session of the Legislature, he signed a bill requiring Texas to have 5,880 megawatts of renewables capacity installed by 2015. The state has already surpassed that requirement, with more than 23,000 megawatts currently. (Kate Galbraith, “Perry Has Sought Energy Diversification — Within Some Important Limits,” [Texas Tribune](#), 8/21/11)