



Rural Dialogues: Murray County

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What are the Rural Climate Dialogues?

- Collaboration since 2013 between IATP and the Jefferson Center
- Work with local leaders to identify priority issues for the county
- Citizens Jury events bring together a microcosm of the community
 - Quality information from local speakers
 - Time to deliberate and identify challenges and opportunities
 - Prioritizes community needs and responses
- Create community-based responses to climate and energy challenges

Murray County Energy Dialogue

- February 20-22, 2020
- 18 demographically balanced participants
- Presentations:
 - Overview of the energy development process
 - Great Plains Institute
 - Murray County finances and decision-making
 - Jean Christoffels and Heidi Winter
 - Design guidelines and developer considerations
 - Mark Lennox, NextEra Energy
 - Impacts of wind on ag and rural economies
 - Dennis Welgraven, County Commissioner



Statement to Neighbors

“This was an amazing opportunity to share in discussion, understand the multiple sides of an issue in order to create a more thorough understanding, and hear opinions other than our own. The encouraging and open forum was helpful, productive and interesting.

In the future, we hope to have more opportunities for public dialogue and a shared focus addressing the challenges related to wind development. As a community, we want more high-quality information from local officials about wind energy and have a desire for direct communication from groups involved in wind development—this may include clearer ways for the community to get involved like local boards focused on incorporating public input on these matters. We believe that communication and education are key and that it is important for community members to be curious and informed about wind energy and other issues in our country and beyond.”

Top Benefits

1. Wind development provides cheaper, cleaner, and safer energy that provides more disposable income for consumers.
2. Wind development provides an increase in all-around tax revenue for the county.
3. Wind development provides good-paying jobs that require additional training, increasing residents' income and education for those who choose careers in this field.
4. People would experience overall cleaner air nationwide.
5. Wind development grows a younger and larger workforce with more families moving into the community as a result of the influx of new jobs.

Top Drawbacks

1. The long-term health effects of wind energy are unknown.
2. The end-of-life cleanup process, waste, and cost from the decommissioned turbine parts and related infrastructure issues.
3. The uncertainty of cost and consequences of unforeseen events like decommissioning, legislative changes new rules and regulations, etc.
4. There are possible legislative changes to the way the wind production tax is distributed locally, which directly impacts quality of life.
5. The energy produced is not staying local—cost savings should be experienced close to where the energy is created.
6. It results in an increased need for road maintenance due to higher levels of industry-related traffic.

Based on what you've learned, do you feel residents should support expanded/future wind development in Murray County?

- **Yes**, under most circumstances / whenever possible
 - 33% (6 votes)
- **Yes**, but only if certain conditions are met / put in place
 - 66% (12 votes)
- **No**, not under any circumstances
 - 0% (0 votes)

Questions?

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- How has COVID-19 affected development in the area?
- Has there been additional community conversation around wind development?
- Other perspectives on this process?