

## Activity Seven: Wind Farm Policy Simulation

### Grade Level

7-12

### Objectives

- Learn about the various stakeholders in wind development
- Consider the roles of decision makers in large infrastructure projects
- Consider multiple view points

### Overview

Youth will role play as various stakeholders in their community to determine how they would approach the locating of a utility-scale wind farm in their community.

### Materials (per group)

- Playing card
- Instructions on role playing and community hearing
- Read an article about existing wind farms: <http://www.bizjournals.com/denver/news/2011/07/13/475m-wind-farm-dedicated-in-weld.html?page=all>

### Estimated Cost of Materials

\$0

### Computer Required?

Yes

### Duration

2 or more class periods

### Primer References

- Wind Power in Colorado
- Colorado Wind Farms
- Economic Impacts of Wind Power Development in Colorado
- Environmental Impacts of Wind Power

### Engagement

1. Who might be interested in the development of a wind farm in your community? Make a list of the stakeholders.
2. What might be a stance that the various stakeholders' might take?
3. Who would be promoting the wind farm? Who might be discouraging the wind farm?

### Investigation

1. Assign youth groups and stakeholder topic areas. (See topic cards below). All groups should conduct research to determine what their stance will be for the community hearing. Each group should read the short description about their stakeholder and use the goal of each stakeholder to best fit the argument they will be attempting to make at the community hearing.
2. The goals are not necessarily to be shared, except amongst the members of the group.
3. Youth should conduct research related to their assigned perspective.

## **Class Engagement**

At the community hearing, the community commissioner group will be listening to the various stakeholders and make a determination about how the community will proceed. The commission group of students can either do research beforehand or listen to the various other presentations and justify its decision as its work.

## **References/For More Information**

- [Wind Energy in Colorado: A Practical Guide for Farmers and Ranchers About Producing Energy from Wind](#)
- <http://www.landsward.nau.edu/windforschools.html>
- [http://www.agmrc.org/media/cms/WIND\\_REPORT\\_Final\\_A97037D9FC0B8.pdf](http://www.agmrc.org/media/cms/WIND_REPORT_Final_A97037D9FC0B8.pdf)

## Wind Company

You represent the company that is developing the wind farm. Likely, you are a large corporation with huge investments in energy resources. You have expansive capital.

Goal: Win over those in the community that have political power or control over regulations governing wind development.

## Landowners

You represent a landowner. Landowners own the land where the turbines might be built, which is likely currently used for ranching or farming. You might have a connection or legacy with the land and want to keep it in agricultural production, but you have the potential of earning money from the wind development.

Goal: Ultimately, you want to make the best financial decision for you personally and you want to maintain your standard of life. You might need to do some research to determine how much money you could receive from wind development.

## Conservation

You are part of a conservation group that protects wildlife for its own sake and/or for the benefit of hunting.

Goal: You want the populations of birds, bats, and other wildlife to not be negatively impacted by the development.

## Wind Power Purchaser

You represent a company that purchases power and distributes it to end consumers. You have to meet the state and federal power regulations and continue to keep end consumers satisfied.

Goal: Strike a balance between buying power as inexpensively as possible and making sure you can always have power available.

## Neighbors—Pro

You represent neighbors and community members that see this as a benefit to the community. You know that it will increase the community's tax base and provide additional employment opportunities.

Goal: You would like to see it built so more money goes to the local school and there are more jobs.

## Neighbors—Con

You represent neighbors and community members that see this as a detriment to the community. You believe this wind farm will be an eye sore, may be noisy, will decrease property values, and you believe it might be harmful wildlife.

Goal: You want to squash this project.

## Industry Group

You represent the wind industry and its employees. You believe in wind energy's ability to create jobs, increase energy independence, diversify the country's energy portfolio, provide a clean source of electricity, and offer a renewable alternative to fossil fuels. You would like to see an increase in wind initiatives wherever feasible.

Goal: See that this wind farm is built.

## County Commissioner

You represent the decision-making body that will determine if this initiative will proceed.

Goal: Make a decision that will benefit the community as a whole without alienating your voting base for the next election.