At a time back in 2008, when I first heard of the "wind project" northwest of Parkers Prairie, it sounded intriguing. As time progressed, it became apparent that the location of the proposed wind farm was to be located in the **heart** of prime agricultural land.

As time passed, Terry Carlson, President of Prairie Wind Energy, got in touch with me, to look at his map of the location of the wind towers. I did relay to him, that it sounded like a neat project, but it is a very poor choice of locations.

The location of the wind towers in the area turns out to be in the dry land corners of irrigated farm land. This presents a dangerous hazard to aerial crop spraying. And there are several acres within the footprint of the wind farm that are impacted by the loss of the ability to spray by air.

There has been, over a period of time, some middle ground found within, for relocation of some wind towers. Most of this is due to, neighbors not wanting a wind tower on their land. By not signing a lease agreement with Prairie Wind Energy, the setback rules forbid certain locations to be utilized.

The Wind Project that is proposed by Prairie Wind Energy has been kept very low profile as to the impact that it will have to the local community, whether positive or negative.

The CN Application meeting held on 4/19/2011, conducted by David Birkholz, did not share any **REAL** information with the public.

1) Prairie Wind Energy did not address who was buying their power until a direct question was asked of them from the audience. Actually, at this time, they do not have a place to sell their power.

2) They are pursuing bids from:
   1 - Road contractors for access roads
   2 - Concrete Prices for tower bases
   3 - They have had boring trucks in the area taking core samples for tower bases, so I've been told.

None of this was brought up at the meeting. It appears there is more going on with this project than they were willing to share with the public at the 4/19/2011 meeting.

A full page article, written by Mark Glaess, manager of Minnesota Rural Electric Association, is published in the February 2011 issue of the Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative monthly newsletter. It states some very eye opening facts about the generation of wind power.

It states that because of the "mandate" put into place by the State of Minnesota, utility companies are being forced down a path of having to buy power generated from wind farms at a rather expensive premium. This is calculated by an average cost of 4.5 cents per kWh paid by utilities, but after the Federal subsidies, the market paid 2.7 cents per kWh produced by wind. This leaves a 1.8 cents kWh loss on 3.4 billion kWh, with total cost to Minnesotans of $62 million in 2009, due to having to buy wind generated power.

It will be hard to balance the Budget crisis by having to subsidize this mandate. This amount of rate increase also adds to the difficulty of the citizens of Minnesota to be able to balance their own personal budgets.

What happens as more wind farms are added to the SYSTEM? Would it be fair to say that the 1.8 cents per kWh loss will only increase more, as more wind farms are added in the future.

After talking to local power suppliers in our area, Lake Region Electric Cooperative, Todd Wadena Electric Cooperative, Runestone Electric Association, Otter Tail Power Company, they all say that being mandated by the State to purchase electricity is driving cost up tremendously. This, at a time when there is an overabundance of power in the system already.

I am all for new ideas, new projects, new jobs, but it appears to me that the cost of "going green" comes with a very hefty price tag!

We totaled my kWh usage for 2009 and 2010, and multiplied by the 1.8 cents increase due to wind power. In my operation alone, my average cost increase due to that is $21,000 per year.

When will the whole truth be told to Minnesotans about the cost of wind power?

Rodney Peterson – Parkers Prairie, MN