Tallgrass Ranchers

LandOwners, Families & Friends

I. Why the Flint Hills are an important resource.

Central to the character of Kansas.

I. Why the Flint Hills are an important resource.

Tourism possibilities.

I. Why the Flint Hills are an important resource.

Last of the tall grass prairie.

I. Why the Flint Hills are an important resource.

Nationally recognized treasure.

What do other people say about us?

"This is the **famous Flint Hills area of Kansas** known for its stretch of rolling hills located in eastern Kansas. This prairie land is covered in a blanket of wildflowers and tall-grasses. The flowers include sunflowers and coneflowers and the **tall-grass can reach as high as *8-feet*!** . . . The northern part of the drive offers views of many **limestone outcroppings**. Heading south the hills stretch out and broad views of expansive prairies will keep you fascinated." ScenicDrivesOnline.com

What do other people say about us?

"There's just something about Kansas that makes me want to trade in my black platform city-girl shoes for a pair of well-tanned cowboy boots. There's just something in the simplicity of the scenery and in the sincere smiles of Kansans that make me want to pack up my belongings and head west. . . . I had no idea that the Flint Hills area in east-central Kansas even existed, much less how breathtakingly beautiful it is." American Woman Road & Travel.

What do other people say about us?

"Although the height of the Hills here is not remarkable, never rising more than three hundred feet from base to crest, their length and breadth would make them noteworthy even in places outside the somewhat level horizon of eastern Kansas, but, were they forested, my English traveler would hardly know she was crossing them. Because they belong to the open world of grasses, they dominate if not the sky then surely the horizon with the symmetrical and flattened tops, their trapezoidal slopes, and (at dawn and sunset) their shadows that can stretch unbrokenly and most visibly for a prairie mile."

from William Least Heat Moon *PrairyErth*, page 13

What do other people say about us?

Flint Hills have been featured in National Geographic

Flint Hills were the subject of a television documentary on PBS

II. Why regulation of turbines in the Flint Hills is important.

Wind turbine complexes industrialize agricultural areas

Wind Turbine Physical Characteristics

More than 375 feet tall
Blade sweep in excess of 300 feet
Strobe Lights
Foundations 45'x45' and 25' deep
Weight in excess of 163 tons
Noisy


(394 ft)
Boeing
747
5 MW

II. Why regulation of turbines in the Flint Hills is important.

Industrial wind turbine complexes cause significant prairie destruction and have significant negative impacts.

Construction destroys native prairie

Requires wide roads, trenching, blasting

Destruction and fragmentation is permanent

Leaves a criss-cross of roads

Proliferation of turbines is a real and growing threat.

- At least 15 separate Flint Hills turbine projects are under discussion. (4,500-20,000 acres each)
- Current grid could theoretically handle 1,000-2,000 turbines, depending on the size

Proliferation of turbines is a real and growing threat.

Potential Future federal RPS

Must take a long-term view now.

State regulation is required to preserve the Flint Hills region

III. Who wants to protect the Flint Hills from industrial wind turbine developments?

Landowners, Ranchers, Neighbors

Tourism Interests

Conservationists

Tallgrass Ranchers' Mission Statement

"The Tallgrass Ranchers are dedicated to preserving the ranching heritage, the scenic beauty, the natural integrity, and the unique landscape of the tallgrass prairie in Kansas while respecting the property rights of others."

Why are landowners, ranchers and neighbors concerned?

Devaluation of their land.

Agricultural Use Value
\+ Intrinsic Value
Market Value

Intrinsic value is substantial and impacted by changes in the character of the area.

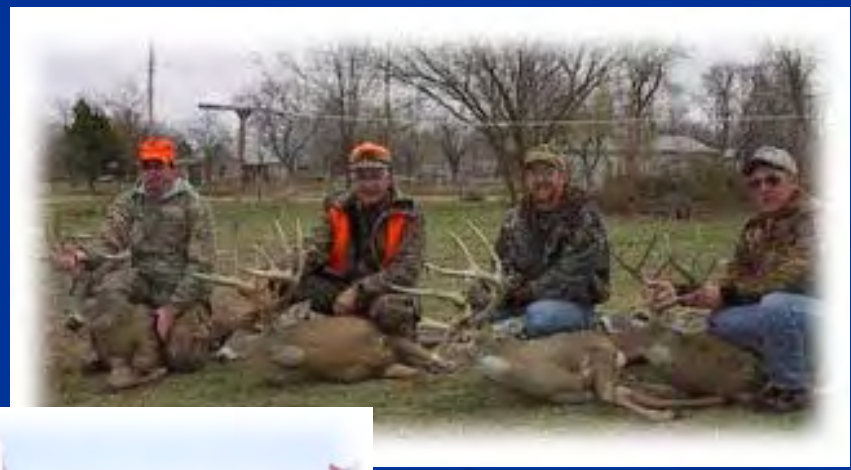
Why are landowners, ranchers and neighbors concerned?

Interference with their enjoyment of their own land. Visible for 25 miles.

In Michigan and Wisconsin wind turbine developers have reportedly purchased neighbors' homes because of noise complaints.

Why are tourism interests concerned?

Open prairie offers a unique destination, with tourism built around 19th century history and natural vistas.

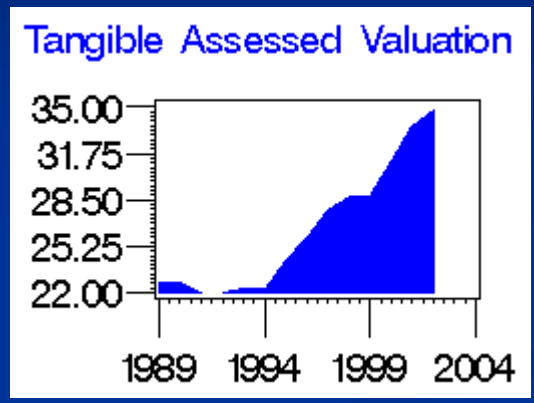


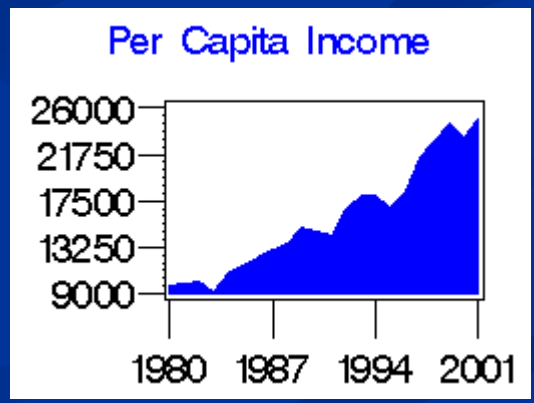
Why are tourism interests concerned?

Significant investments and planning have already been made based on the natural character and history of the Flint Hills.

Why are the tourism interests concerned?

- From 1993 to 1998 Flint Hills travel/tourism grew in Butler County by 173%, in Morris County by 234%, in Chase County by 2,017%.
- Using a $60/day average traveler expenditure, Kansas Scenic Byways Program estimates $2.4 MILLION annual contribution from Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve alone.





- Traveler expenditures in the 3 counties were $33 MILLION in 1998.
- Cultural/heritage tourism is one of the favored tourism markets nearly doubling in importance from the 1980s to the 1990s.
- Nature based tourism is expected to grow 10-30% annually.
- We already see the loss of 12,000 acres of year of agricultural land in Kansas.

Why are conservationists concerned?

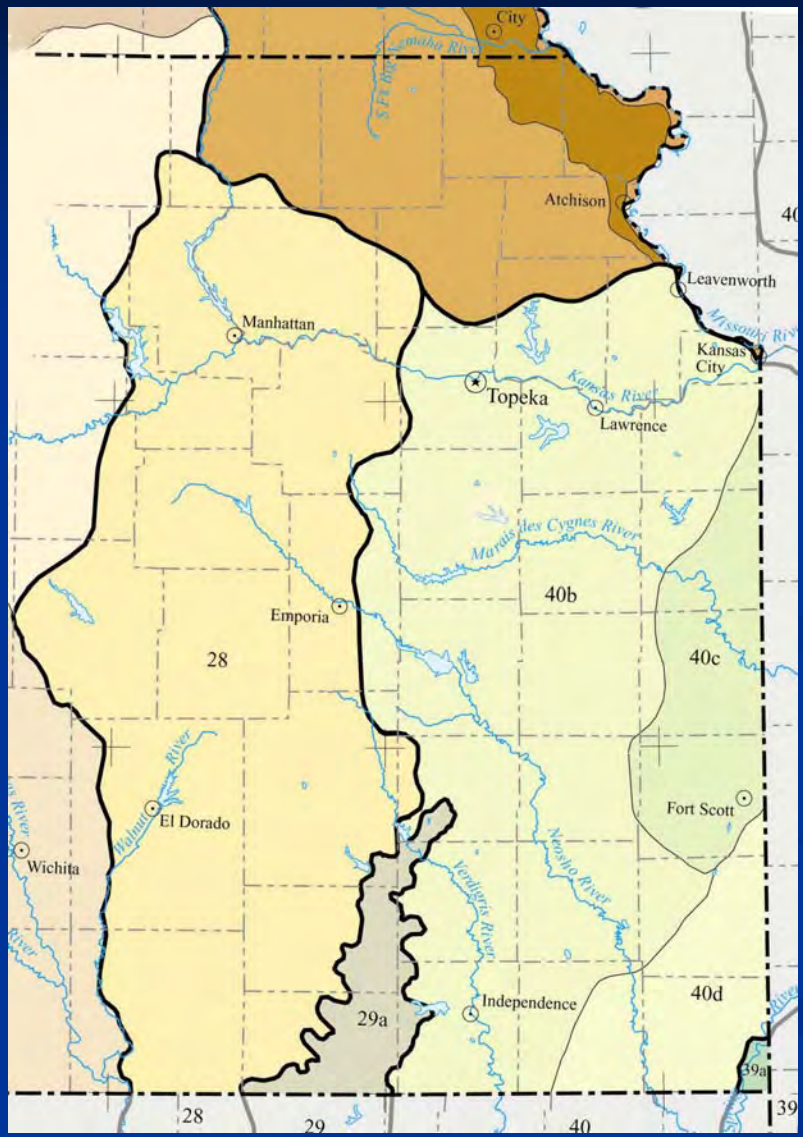
Concerned conservationists include the Nature Conservancy, Kansas Natural Resource Council, Kansas Wildlife Federation, and Audubon of Kansas.

Their concerns include:

- Fragmentation of the prairie, destroying its ecosystem.
- Loss of unique natural habitat.
- Interference with Prairie Chicken nesting, and related hunting.

Why is state-level action needed?

Flint Hills is not in the jurisdiction of any other single government entity.


City
Atchison
Leavenworth
Manhattan
Kansas City
Topeka
Kansas River
Lawrence
Marais des Cygnes River
40b
Emporia
28
40c
Fort Scott
Walnut River
El Dorado
Wichita
Verdigris River
Neosho River
Independence
40d
29a
28
29
40
39

Why is state-level action is needed?

Counties are behind the curve—i.e., no zoning controls at all.

In some counties, the guy with the bulldozer is on the planning commission.

In Butler County right after the 2000 primary a wind developer solicited a future county commissioner with an "option" deal giving him annual cash payments.

In another county, despite hours of hearings, an opponent has been allowed to speak for only 3 minutes.

Issues with safety may be beyond the expertise of counties

Common failures are caused by lightning strikes, storms and icing.

"Wind speeds at current hub heights in the Midwest may be so great at times that they exceed the design margins for today's wind turbines." Renewable Energy World, September/October 2003.

Other issues beyond local expertise:

- Noise
- Ice-throw risk
- Radio-frequency/transmission reception interference
- Necessary spacing/setbacks

Why is state-level action is needed?

Flint Hills wind turbine developers' misdeeds:

Offering money to school boards if and only if they write a letter of recommendation.

Offering $1.75 Million to county government in exchange for a favorable zoning decisions. A District Court Judge found the behavior "repugnant to due process."

Selling unlicensed securities based on overblown promises of huge returns to unsophisticated investors.

Pressuring the elderly to sign leases without talking to their children.

Offering edited reports, deleting the pages and pages of cautionary matter.

Why is state-level action is needed?

Protection of the Flint Hills is of state-wide interest.

Why is state-level action is needed?

Governor's Task Force cannot do the job alone or soon enough.

Country Life magazine survey found industrial wind turbine complexes to be the #1 most hated eyesore in Great Britain

Washington Times 2/4/2004 "As wind farms grow, wind power is increasingly unpopular. Why? Wind farms are noisy, land-intensive and unsightly."

V. Priorities--value of wind energy does not outweigh value of the unique Flint Hills.

Where the impacts are low, wind energy be worth pursuing, but its benefits do not outweigh its social costs in the Flint Hills.

Wind energy is experimental and is driven by tax benefits, not its own free-market merits.

- Wind turbine complexes are built only because:
  - Federal Production Tax Credits.
  - Accelerated depreciation tax benefit (60% in the first year).
  - State property tax exemption.
- Wind turbine complexes operate as tax shelters. Tax breaks and subsidies may far exceed income from sale of electricity, particularly in the early years of operation.
- California found in the 1970s that when tax benefits were exhausted it was left with "wind turbine cemeteries"

Wind energy is land intensive; produces little electricity.

Depending on spacing, wind turbines use **30 to 200 times more acreage** per megawatt than gas plants.

Even then, turbines produce electricity only when wind is high enough, but not too high.

In a year, the two largest European wind complexes, with 159 turbines, produce less electricity than one conventional 2,000 megawatt station produces in 4 days.

In 2002 all 15,000 turbines in the US produced less electricity than a single large coal power plant.

Wind does not displace foreign energy sources.

- Kansas produces electricity from natural gas, coal and nuclear power—not imported oil.
- Oil is used only for "peaking plants" when demand is highest--<1%.
- When demand is highest, wind is usually lowest.

United States has a glut of electricity capacity--no pressing need for increased capacity.

Wall Street Journal reported 2/9/2004

"Lured by the promise of deregulated utility markets in the early 1990s, the electric-power industry added far more generating plants than will be needed for years."

Most of the economic benefits flow out of state.

Main expenditure is to purchase equipment—about 90% is supplied by overseas companies.

Most of the economic benefits flow out of state.

Developers/operators are largely multi-national corporations, often based overseas.

juwi

juwi international

Most of the economic benefits flow out of state.

Revenues to landowner go to only a few, visual impact and tax exemption affect many more.

After initial construction very few jobs are involved.

Utility scale wind turbine complexes

- Are incompatible with the pastoral and cultural character of the Flint Hills region
- Will damage the tourism potential, scenic beauty and wildlife habitat of the Flint Hills region
- Will reduce the enjoyment of life and property values of neighboring landowners
- Will forever change the character of the Flint Hills from agricultural to industrial