

**Submission
No 23**

INQUIRY INTO RURAL WIND FARMS

Name: Mr Douglas Arnott

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NSW Rural Wind Farm Enquiry

9/8/2009

Submitted by Douglas Arnott

Background :-

I am a 38 year old farmer situated at 25 km NE of Coolah, N.S.W. My farm is a 2500 ha cattle, sheep and goat grazing property located on the Liverpool Range. I currently have an agreement with a wind development company Epuron Pty Ltd to monitor wind on my property and assess wind farm development. Epuron have installed a wind monitoring tower on my property (Birnam Wood) in February 2009. I have documented the benefits of wind farming in my area below.

My Role in a wind farm :-

My role would be to have wind towers erected on my property if a wind farm development was feasible in the area and given development consent.

Community Benefits of a wind farm :-

- Jobs are in my opinion the biggest community benefit. The local town population is approximately 850 people and as a community we constantly have to fight to maintain services such as teachers & police in an area of dwindling population. A project of the size proposed by Epuron would create in the vicinity of 10 full time jobs plus a large number of construction jobs. This influx has a massive flow on effect to a small community such as Coolah and benefits all sectors such as schools, shops, clubs etc.
- The extra income in the pockets of farmers with wind turbine rent adds a large amount of money into the local economy. Farmers will often use excess money to upgrade farm infrastructure such as fencing, buildings, yards etc and this will all generate further economic activity via fencing contractors, rural supply shops and extra farm employment. In talking to one farming couple they said if a wind project did eventuate it would mean they would go back to employing a person full time again. If this is replicated a few times in an area such as Coolah then it will have a large flow on effect.
- Large companies tend to support local community organisations when they become involved in a local community and this could benefit organisations such as the Junior Sports Club, Rugby Club, Golf Club etc.
- Councils could potentially have greater rateable income on property with wind turbines located on it which could be reinvested back in roads and other services.

Personal Benefits of a wind Farm :-

The benefits personally would firstly be the income generated from the land rental from having wind turbines installed on the farm. This extra income would benefit the farm in the following areas :-

- Wind income would essentially drought proof the farm. Having the income generated in this way would mean our farming operation could be further taken down the path of being a holistic balanced grazing operation whereby livestock numbers can be better matched to seasonal grazing conditions. In drought times livestock numbers could be reduced with monetary considerations of destocking eased as other income would still be coming in from wind generation. This destocking helps maintain pasture ground cover which in turn reduces erosion, reduces water run off & improves water course water quality and maintain organic matter in the soils which is a building block for soil carbon.
- As part of a whole farm plan high value conservation areas such as the gorge area's at the head of the Coolahburragundy river and could be fenced off to preserve vegetation and wildlife. Livestock would be excluded from these areas. This work could only all be done with other revenue streams such as wind as the reduction of grazing area does have an impact on an already slim farm profit.
- Money would be used to upgrade farm infrastructure that would ensure a long term profitable and safe working environment. This fits in with my number one farm priority which is to pass the farm onto the next generation in a better state than when I arrived.

The other benefits would be derived from personally contributing to a future with renewable energy that will not only benefit my family but also the greater community and environment.