

OAH No. 3-2500-21662-2, MPUC Dkt No. IP6701/WS-08-1233

**STATE OF MINNESOTA
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
FOR THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

**IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION BY AWA GOODHUE WIND, LLC
FOR A SITE PERMIT FOR A LARGE WIND ENERGY CONVERSIONS SYSTEM FOR A 78 MW
WIND PROJECT IN GOODHUE COUNTY**

DIRECT TESTIMONY

OF

CHRIS KALASS

ON BEHALF OF

AWA GOODHUE, LLC

JANUARY 28, 2011

1 **BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

2 **DIRECT TESTIMONY OF CHRIS KALASS**

3 **Q: Please state your name and address.**

4 A: My name is Chris Kalass. My address is 40780 165th Avenue, Zumbrota, Minnesota
5 55992.

6 **Q: Where do you live?**

7 A: I live on a farm in Minneola Township in Goodhue County, Minnesota.

8 **Q: How long have you lived there?**

9 A: I have lived in my present house for over nine years. I have lived nearly my entire life in
10 the area. I was born in Goodhue County and grew up here. I graduated from Zumbrota High
11 School in 1989.

12 **Q: What do you do for a living?**

13 A: I own 280 acres of land, which I farm full-time. I also rent additional acreage from
14 several neighboring landowners. I grow primarily soybeans, sweet corn, and peas. I have about
15 230 head of feed cattle.

16 **Q: Have you signed a lease agreement to allow AWA Goodhue to install wind turbines**
17 **on your property?**

18 A: Yes, I signed a lease agreement in March of 2009.

19 **Q: How many turbines might be on your property?**

20 A: Under the current layout, I understand there will be one turbine on my property.

21 **Q: Are you concerned about living with a large wind turbine on your property?**

22 A: No, I am not concerned at all.

23 **Q: Why aren't you concerned?**

1 A: I'm not concerned because I don't expect the wind turbine on my property, or any other
2 wind turbines in the area for that matter, to generate any noise or other impacts that will be
3 bothersome to me. I have been to the large wind farms in Mower County and observed the
4 turbines in operation at close distance. Any noise from the wind turbines is readily masked by
5 the sound of the wind itself, and from just a short distance away, the turbines are essentially
6 silent even when the wind is low but the turbines are still spinning. I certainly do not expect to
7 be bothered by sounds from the turbines that I cannot even hear.

8 **Q: Will it bother you to see wind turbines on your property and on the horizon?**

9 A: No, that won't bother me, even though I will see them every day. I have seen the
10 turbines down in Mower County, and I did not find the wind turbines to be an intrusion on my
11 visual sightlines.

12 **Q: Are you concerned that your cattle might be affected by stray voltage caused by the
13 wind turbine on your property?**

14 A: No, I have absolutely no concern that the wind turbine on my property will cause stray
15 voltage that will affect my cattle. The power to my house and to my farm buildings is totally
16 independent of the wind turbine. There is no connection between anything related to the wind
17 project and my buildings. I have not heard of a single farmer who has complained that a nearby
18 wind turbine is affecting his farming operations due to stray voltage.

19 **Q: What would you say to your neighbors who are opposed to the wind project?**

20 A: I would say that they need to accept the change that is coming, that we need to do our
21 part in contributing to the expansion of this new, renewable energy source, that Goodhue County
22 cannot partition itself off from the rest of society. I would say that 1500 feet is an acceptable
23 separation if people don't want to participate, that they won't be adversely affected by the sounds

1 made by the turbine blades. I would also tell them that it is a minor inconvenience that they will
2 be able to see wind turbines on the horizon at times and that such an impact is a small intrusion
3 for the good the wind turbines will bring. Finally, I would tell them that those of us who are
4 looking forward to the turbines on our property have a right to use our property in that way and
5 that we are not interfering with their way of life.

6 **Q: Do you have neighbors who support the project?**

7 A: Certainly. In my view, the majority of people in the townships, including those who
8 haven't signed a lease for a turbine, support the project. It is only an outspoken minority of
9 residents who object to the project and would like to see it not go in.

10 **Q: Are some of your nearby neighbors opposed to the project?**

11 A: Yes, some of my closest neighbors have been critics of the project.

12 **Q: Does the fact that some of your neighbors oppose the project jeopardize your ability
13 to install one or more turbines on your property?**

14 A: Yes, it certainly does, because as I understand it, the county would require the wind
15 developer to be more than a half mile from the base of the residence of a landowner who hasn't
16 signed on to the project. While my neighbors will be significantly farther from any turbines on
17 my property than I will be at my house, their opposition could still preclude the developer from
18 putting up any turbines on my land because they are closer than a half mile away.

19 **Q: Will you be paid for having one or more turbines on your property?**

20 A: Yes, I will be paid by the wind company for allowing one or more turbines to be
21 constructed on my property.

22 **Q: How much will you be paid?**

1 A: According to figures provided by AWA Goodhue, and assuming the project is built as
2 proposed, I expect to receive in excess of \$10,000 per year, and more than \$300,000 over 20
3 years.

4 **Q: What do you intend to do with that money?**

5 A: First of all, while I'm not going to be able to retire on that money, it certainly helps. I
6 have worked outside jobs over the years but for the last few years I have worked full-time on the
7 farm. An annual payment from the wind company will help me make it on just my farm income.
8 The money I receive will likely be spent locally, buying materials and supplies for the farm and
9 to remodel my house.

10 **Q: Has AWA Goodhue treated you fairly and with respect?**

11 A: Yes, I feel that the people from the wind company that I have dealt with have been fair
12 and open with me. They have readily answered my questions.

13 **Q: What does a delay in construction mean to you?**

14 A: I am disappointed to see that the project has been delayed because it results in a delay of
15 payments to me. Also, if a lengthy delay jeopardizes the project so that it is unable to go
16 forward, I will be even more upset. Further, I am hopeful that payments to local government
17 from the wind company will also help to keep my property taxes down.

18 **Q: Does this conclude your testimony?**

19 A: Yes it does.