

Wind Energy – Local Economic Benefits for Tennessee

Tennessee is already taking advantage of wind energy. The state is home to the Southeast's first wind farm, Buffalo Mountain, which generates enough electricity to power 3,400 homes a year. Additionally, the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) has entered into contracts with wind farms across the Midwest, delivering 1,242 megawatts (MW) of low cost energy to TVA customers.

Over the past five years, wind turbine technology has advanced significantly. **Wind projects bring significant economic resources to local communities by increasing tax revenue, creating jobs, and boosting turbine landowners with annual lease payments.**

Wind Farms Contribute to Local Tax Revenues:

- Municipalities with wind farms frequently use the additional tax revenue for improvements to fire departments, police departments, schools, roads or government operations.
- Over the past three years, the fifteen wind turbines at the Buffalo Mountain wind farm in Anderson County have provided over \$375,000 in county taxes.
- North Carolina's recently completed Amazon Wind Farm is expected to generate \$250,000 in property taxes in 2017 for Pasquotank County.
- Amazon Wind Farm, is now the largest taxpayer in both counties the turbines are located in.

Wind Turbines Provide Significant Payments to Landowners:

- Land lease payments assist private landowners in retaining their private property, while a significant amount of land is still useful for its initial purposes.
- Wind farms now pay \$222 million dollars a year to farming families and other rural landowners.
- More than \$156 million dollars go to landowners in counties with below average incomes.
- The Amazon Wind Farm compensates landowners \$6,000 dollars per turbine per year. With 104 turbines, that's \$624,000 dollars of landowner payments a year!

Wind Power Creates Local Jobs:

- Based on analysis from NREL's Jobs and Economic Development Index model, for every one MW of wind power capacity constructed in Tennessee, approximately 4.8 direct, indirect and induced are created.
- The N.C. Wind Farm created 500 construction jobs and 17 full time operation jobs (the average salary for full-time positions was \$80,000).
- Hundreds of wind farm construction workers bring economic benefits to hotels, restaurants, and other businesses.



Source: NREL

Wind Farms Are Frequently Tourist Attractions:

- The Buffalo Mountain project is highlighted as one of the "most visited attractions" for nearby Windrock Park, which is nationally acclaimed as the country's largest private riding park for off-highway vehicles (OHV), all-terrain vehicles (ATV), and dirt bikes.

Sources:

- Tennessee Valley Authority. "[Wind Energy Contracts](#)"
- [Anderson County Financial Report](#) (June 2006).
- Southern Alliance for Clean Energy (February, 2017). "[First Wind Farm in North Carolina Takes Flight](#)"
- American Wind Energy Association (March 2016). "[Wind power pays \\$222 million a year to rural landowners](#)"
- National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL). "[Jobs and Economic Development Index model](#)"
- Southeastern Wind Coalition. "[Wind Energy and Economic Development in Eastern North Carolina](#)"
- Southern Alliance for Clean Energy (January 2014). "[Tourists Flock to Wind Turbines](#)"

The Southern Wind Energy Association (SWEA) is an industry-led initiative that works to promote the responsible development of wind energy throughout the South. SWEA's scope includes onshore wind development in-region, wind energy use in-region, offshore wind energy development in-region, and wind energy-related transmission development that affects the region.



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