

**Skip and Eileen Sieger**

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**From:** "Larry & Vicki Patton" <protecttheflinthills@wheatstate.com>  
**To:** <Undisclosed-Recipient:;>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 26, 2004 6:02 PM  
**Attach:** 10-25-04.doc  
**Subject:** Riley Co.

**TheMercury.com****10/25/2004 3:21:09 PM****Thursday 'go' for wind regs****Mark Scott Staff Writer**

**After reviewing a revised version of the proposed wind energy zoning regulations document this morning, all indications are the commission will formally adopt the regulations Thursday.**

**"I anticipate we will formally accept them (zoning regulations) at that time," Riley County Commission Chairman Mike Kearns said at the conclusion of this morning's session.**

**Riley County commissioner Al Johnson had sought revisions to the document, which has been in the works for the past 12 months. Johnson got the changes he wanted to see made.**

**The first dealt with the rights of property owners adjacent to a proposed wind energy to protest that project. The revised regulations now include properties within 1,000 feet of the perimeter of lands that are or were in common or contiguous ownership with the land that is the subject of the wind energy farm application. This means even if a wind energy farm is proposed for only part of the property, the boundaries of the entire tract are used to figure the 1,000 foot protest petition area.**

**The boundary is calculated by determining the date the project boundary was subject to a lease or easement granting wind rights, or five years prior to the wind energy farm application.**

**"This will make sure we notify at least all of the neighbors," Riley County planning director Monty Wedel said.**

**If the landowners representing 20 percent of the neighboring property submit a valid protest petition within 14 days of a recommendation by the Riley County Planning Board to approve a project, a 3-0 vote by the Riley County Commission would be required for the project's approval.**

**Kearns got no support for the suggestion that the 1,000 feet requirement be expanded to match the visual dominance zone, which is 20 times the height of a wind tower.**

**The other major change dealt with reclamation of a wind energy farm project and includes a provision calling for the estimated reclamation costs to be adjusted annually based on the rate of inflation.**

**As he had promised to do, Kearns offered a motion to prohibit wind energy farm development entirely. Neither Johnson or commissioner Bob Newsome supported that motion.**

**Kearns described the wind towers as "40-story industrial complexes that would change the land from urban-rural to industrial."**

**"If we allow them, we might as well allow anything," Kearns said.**

**The moratorium on wind energy farm applications expires Oct. 31.**

**A four-hour public hearing was conducted on Oct. 4, with comment heavily in favor of revising the regulations. Some people asked that the commission prohibit commercial wind energy development in the County.**

**The regulations detail an extensive process requiring a wind energy developer to obtain a special use permit to construct commercial wind energy farm on land zoned for agricultural uses.**

**The zoning regulations provide guidelines for the siting of wind farms, set the maximum height at 355 feet (400 feet if the increase results in fewer**

wind towers per project) and create a procedure where adjacent landowners can file a protest petition.

**Orion Energy, an Oakland, Calif.-based company, is planning a commercial wind energy farm project off Deep Creek Road.**

**You can reach Mark Scott by phone at 776-2300, ext. 249, or by e-mail at [msscott@themercury.com](mailto:msscott@themercury.com)**

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**From:** "Larry & Vicki Patton" <protecttheflinthills@wheatstate.com>  
**To:** <Undisclosed-Recipient:>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 07, 2004 11:21 PM  
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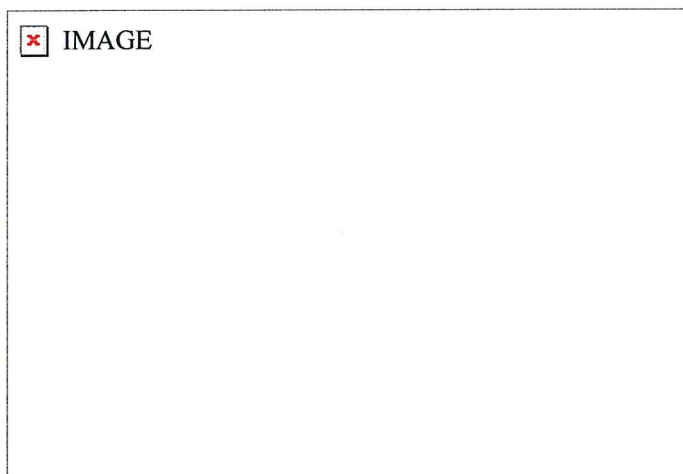
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**Debating the wind: County gets an earful**

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**Kathryn Mayes Staff Writer**



County Commission chairman Mike Kearns introduces commissioners Bob Newsome and Al Johnson to a large crowd at the beginning of today's wind farm hearing. [Photo: David Mayes]

If the first few speakers at this morning's wind farm hearing are any indication, a lot of rural property owners in Riley County want to make sure their rights and values are protected — and that they'll have the opportunity to protest.

Commissioners held the public hearing to consider approval of proposed regulations that would govern the development of wind farms in the county. The event drew an audience of about 120

"In terms of impact, 1,000 feet is very small," said McDowell Creek Road resident Margey Stewart.

Pat King, who recently retired to the Deep Creek area, said turbines in the Flint Hills could keep people from wanting to retire here.

"Things like this could have very possibly affected my decision," she said.

Some also said they favored wind energy.

Darrell Westervelt, a rural land owner and former Riley County commissioner, said he had a "vested interest" in wind energy.

"That vested interest is my three grandchildren," he said. "In their lifetimes, we're going to run short of fossil fuels.

He encouraged the Commission to adopt the regulations before them. "We need to do our part and not say put them in somebody else's backyard," he added.

Orion Energy of Oakland Calif. is considering a project off Deep Creek Road.

The Commission broke for lunch at noon and was expected to resume the hearing at 1 p.m.

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