



Kingman County, KS Uses Millions in Wind Farm Revenue to Protect Citizens

Wind funds used to invest in Law Enforcement, Fire Services and Roads

Kingman County, Kansas officials made smart decisions over a decade ago when they approved the Flat Ridge 2 wind project, following by two more wind developments over the next eight years. Those projects have provided the county over \$10 million in revenue over the last decade, allowing Kingman County and the communities within to invest in their public safety and local infrastructure. Kingman County has smartly used funds for their law enforcement center and for rural fire protection. Meanwhile, participating landowners are each reaping \$10,000 or more for each windmill on their land. That's guaranteed annual income for farmers that also has a direct positive impact on the local economy. The Kingman County Commissioners are so "bought in" to their wind farms that one commissioner told the state to "leave our local control alone" when there was discussion of statewide restrictions.

Kingman County recognizes the balance that's needed with renewable energy – with wind farms come the ability to provide better services to protect and serve their citizens. In 2022 alone, Kingman County received \$1.6 million and will continue to reap these considerable benefits for the foreseeable future – enabling local officials to invest in their citizen's safety, protection and the growth of their communities.

For Protection and Safety

Kingman officials recognize that as leaders, their priority must be the protection and safety of their citizens. To that end, in 2012 they used an initial \$300,000 from one wind farm payment to provide updates to the Kingman County Law Enforcement Center, which one official said gives law enforcement what they need: more space and

better safety. And they did this without having to raise taxes. Then, in 2014 Kingman used additional funds from the wind farm to improve roads and support fire protection. Again, this ensures that citizen safety is always a priority while avoiding a financial burden on citizens.

In 2016 Kingman County provided a \$300,000 grant from wind funds to Cunningham to enhance fire protection services. This helped cover the costs of “...improvements and additions to the city’s fire department facilities and/or equipment...”

For Local Communities

Kingman County also understood that the revenue from the wind farms provided the opportunity to support communities in the county and to improve services and infrastructure.

In 2020, Kingman officials provided funding for the following communities:

- Nashville \$150,000
- Spivey \$75,000
- Zenda \$75,000, which used some of the money to repair the city’s water tower, and they have discussed using the remaining money on a backup generator, culvert repairs, and park improvements.

To Avoid Tax increases

In the end, the wind farms have allowed for investments and improvements in the lives of Kingman citizens, which might have involved tax increases without the wind funds. In fact, 2017 saw the county use some funds for a mill levy buydown which saved the county money and kept the levy stable for two consecutive years.

How has this been possible?

Kingman County have successfully utilized wind farms to benefit their landowners and communities, beginning with an early embrace in 2012. Flat Ridge 2 began operation that year becoming the first wind farm in Kingman County. This project can produce 419 megawatts, powering around 140,000 homes.

The Kingman Wind Energy Center became the county’s second project, becoming operational in 2017. This 200-megawatt project initially paid the county \$2.2 million

and agreed to pay almost \$1 million resurfacing county roads. Flat Ridge 3, beginning operation in 2020, is estimated to bring over \$20 million to the region.

Supporting Kingman families and Kansas jobs

It has even been estimated that landowners receive around \$10,500 yearly for each turbine on their land. Today's farmers have enough challenges, and their ability to lease a small portion of their land to gain a steady income ensures that they can retain their land as productive farmland and keep their property in the family for future generations.

Additionally, the wind farm construction and the community improvement projects all contribute to the Kansas and Kingman economies, and provide employment opportunities for Kansans. Kingman County wind farms utilized over 700 construction workers. And each renewable energy project undertaken by Kingman helps the local economy. The Law Enforcement Center improvement work went to a local Wichita firm.

Without the income from wind farms, Kingman County would not be able to provide these benefits to their landowners and communities. Benefits will motivate people to seek out Kingman County as a destination for their families and businesses which will help it grow into a new, economically stable future while maintaining its traditional agrarian culture.