Wind Farms and the Military

Legislation aimed at restricting the development of wind energy projects with the goal of preserving the readiness of military bases in North Carolina has necessitated further inquiry into the subject. As a result, experts from key military stakeholder groups (e.g., Navy, Coast Guard, Department of Defense) are weighing in. Military input allows us to bring practical and informed solutions to this issue, and the consensus thus far is that the most effective way to address military concerns about wind farms is to approach them from a project specific perspective, not by imposing a blanket ban.

A blanket ban on wind turbines denies one of the best economic development tools available to rural communities.

Wind farms can and do successfully coexist with military bases around the country.

How do they coexist?

- Wind farms often take measures to accommodate the military, including micro-siting, radar upgrades, and giving the military the ability to turn off turbines at agreed upon times.

- Wind energy can help the military stay operational during emergencies that interrupt the rest of the grid.
## Potential Military Interaction Issues:

### OBSTRUCTION

For towers placed within a military fly-zone, most flight paths occur well above the 500-600 ft tower height, rendering tower placement a non-issue. There are some low-level specific training routes in NC that are used by pilots relatively new to low-level flying, which are addressed in the DoD Clearinghouse process outlined below.

### RADAR INTERFERENCE

Various air and ground radar systems track weather, satellites, transportation vehicles, and weapons systems. There are very few wind projects presenting radar challenges that cannot be mitigated utilizing system upgrades or siting changes. The DoD Clearinghouse considers all potential radar interactions and is the vehicle for mitigation solutions.

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### The DoD Clearinghouse

The law requires wind developers to clear projects with the Clearinghouse a minimum of 45 days prior to commencing construction, though most projects begin this process years in advance. Once informed, the Clearinghouse solicits input from all affected branches of the military, including every base potentially impacted. Wind developers and base commanders discuss concerns, and final approvals or denials are determined by the Military. The Clearinghouse uses input gained to work with developers on mitigating or eliminating potential military and national security impacts from the proposed wind farm.

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These processes protect the readiness of military bases while still empowering rural communities with economic development and increased revenue opportunities. Supporting a project specific approach is both pro-military and pro-wind.