



Ethical Wind Farm Siting

Siting 101

Siting is essentially the first step of any wind project

It comes many flavors depending on the granularity you need to proceed with the project

It can be as basic as measuring the wind speed to as complex as running ROC drills and examining the topology of the land

Project Description



- I made a podcast with a friend discussing the ethics of this step!
- We imagined ourselves as wind project developers and tried to make ethically sound decisions about this process
- You can listen to the podcast here but let's tour the discussion at a high-level

Stakeholders and Values

Stakeholders:

- Siemens Gamesa
- Nahua-Pipil – indigenous peoples
- Animals
- Land-Owners
- Government

Values

- Ecofeminism – value of humans vs animals
- Utilitarianism – what is the most beneficial scenario
- Autonomy
- Justice

Interesting Questions & Remarks

Interesting Remarks:

- There is a scaling of values when applied to these situations
- The sunk cost fallacy is not as fallacious depending on the circumstance
- Money talks and is a value in this situation
- The best way to integrate ethical decision making into this process is to do so at the beginning before getting carried away with money and research

What should we do if we are sitting on indigenous land?

Is this dependent on the relationship with the people's relationship with the government?

Questions & Remarks ctd.

- What if Siemens Gamesa sponsors the research into this project? Does this affect any of the values?
- What if we discover that our wind project interferes with a migratory route for birds?
- What if we build a wind farm on a graveyard? Does this affect any of the values?
 - How do we value monetary concerns over respect for the dead?

Conclusions

- Regarding indigenous people, we should always consult them and consider their autonomy as the most important thing regardless of government relation
- If Siemens joins in, money starts to move up our values list but we'll hold fast to the land-owners autonomy being #1
 - But our own autonomy comes into question with Siemens looming over us
- If migratory birds interfere, with a lot of hesitation we might go through with the project if the opportunity cannot be given up. (not money wise, just energy production wise)
- But we will under no conditions build a wind turbine on a graveyard.

**Do you have thoughts on our
conclusions?**