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Community Wind Can Play a Pioneering Role in Renewable Energy Development

New report looks at opportunities to increase local wind turbine ownership

Wind power is booming and the U.S. is now the world leader with billions of dollars in growth each year. From Wall Street to Main Street investor interest in wind power is booming, but policies now favor large institutional investors. Opening up wind power ownership to smaller investors, local lenders, farmers, ranchers, consumer-owned utilities, school districts, colleges, Native tribes and other citizens will allow more people to enjoy the financial benefits of wind power while accelerating its growth.

[*Community Wind 101: A Primer for Policymakers*](#), was released today by the 25x'25 Alliance, Energy Foundation and Harvesting Clean Energy, as Congress once again tackles energy legislation and just months in advance of a new Administration and Congress which are expected to make energy a top priority. The report makes clear that community wind must be an integral part of the nation's energy strategy and lays out a set of public policies designed to grow local wind investment and ownership.

[*Community Wind 101*](#) finds:

- Wind power economic benefits from local ownership can be multiplied in the range of two to three times or more compared to standard development models.
- Community wind can play a pioneering role for all wind power and accelerate wind development by vastly diversifying the range of players who can invest.
- Smaller investors cannot fully access federal tax incentives vital to wind development. Broadening the usefulness of these incentives and/or targeting incentives to community wind would significantly expand local investment and ownership opportunities.

“Rural landowners and communities are experiencing tremendous economic benefits from wind power development,” notes **25x'25 Project Coordinator Ernie Shea**. “[*Community Wind 101*](#) demonstrates the potential for local ownership to multiply revenues and job creation.”

Bentham Paulos, Renewable Power Program Director for Energy Foundation, underscores, “Wind power provides a fully developed renewable, emissions-free alternative. Opening more options for local ownership by farmers, electric co-operatives and other community institutions will provide a significant boost for wind development. [*Community Wind 101*](#) details the policy changes needed to expand local ownership.”

“Favorable federal policies have been vital to wind growth overall,” points out **Lloyd Ritter with Green Capitol**. “But these policies haven't gone far enough to advance locally-owned wind power and generate the kind of sustainable development everyone supports.”

Report author **Patrick Mazza, Research Director for Harvesting Clean Energy**, comments, “The lesson emerging from community wind experience is that local ownership has great potential to grow wind generation. But this potential will only be realized with the right kind of policies. [*Community Wind 101*](#) shows where and how model state policies are working, and how they can be replicated at the federal level. It also points to ways existing federal policies can be improved to support increased local wind investment.”

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