

Cultural service to create record of lost landscapes

By Dennis Stillings

Wind farms are going up all over this area. Nearly 200 turbines are under construction north of Luverne right now, and another large phase of development, Ashtabula III, is scheduled to go up south of Interstate 94 in the near future.

The Otesco wind project in Green Township will be carried out within 5 years. Green Township is a particularly attractive area with gentle hills that are very colorful in autumn. These graceful hills will soon be topped by 400-foot wind turbines. Other sprawling projects are being planned throughout the state, many of them in the scenic and historical Coteau region.

Once these projects are completed, our prairie lands with their rolling hills, wooded ravines, lakes and streams will be blighted for a hundred years by innumerable wind turbines and hundreds of miles of transmission lines—monuments to environmentalist hubris and technological excess. This pinwheel junkyard will be the dominant feature of this area until the end of our lifetimes and the lifetimes of our children.

There will be a generation of North Dakota children raised in Pinwheel Land who will have never seen, and will have no memory of, an unspoiled, uncluttered view. The black silhouettes of giant wind turbines will scar both sunrise and sunset.

I have done quite a bit of work photographing the Grand Prairie countryside where I live as well as that of the surrounding area. I believe that it is important to give future generations a record of what these areas once looked like, and I am calling on all amateur photographers to pay more attention to the grand scenery of this region. It would be an important cultural and historical service for, say, the Obsessed Photographers to consider creating a pictorial record of our lost landscapes.