

## Iowa Wind Energy is Rock Solid

Written by Elisha Smith  
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By Paul Mansoor, [paulm@cfra.org](mailto:paulm@cfra.org) , Center for Rural Affairs

Wind development in Iowa is on the upswing.

The Rock Island Clean Line is a transmission project that will help transform rural economies in the upper Midwest, like Iowa.

Clean Line, the developers behind Rock Island, are placing a converter station in O'Brien County, IA that will transform harvested wind-energy into high-voltage direct current (HVDC).

Traditionally relying on agri-business, O'Brien County's economic interests have embraced the potential of renewable energy. Like many rural areas in the upper Midwest, O'Brien County has stellar wind-resources, but lacks a way to send that harvested energy anywhere. This bottleneck often stalls wind-farm development, costing jobs, tax revenues and renewable energy potential.

O'Brien County's Economic Development Corporation supports the line and understands it offers tremendous economic development opportunity.

With a direct path for harvested wind-energy, wind-farms will quickly sprout within 100 miles of the converter station. This will mean manufacturing jobs (producing wind turbines), skilled labor (installing turbines and transmission infrastructure), and permanent positions to monitor and maintain the line after it's built.

Delivering 3,500 megawatts of electricity from the Great Plains eastward, the Rock Island line will create an estimated 5,000 construction jobs during the building phase, and over 500 operations jobs once the line is complete.

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The Center for Rural Affairs supports clean transmission that bolsters wind energy development, bringing economic and environmental benefits to rural America. The Rock Island Line is a step in the right direction--just ask O'Brien County.

Follow Rock Islands' progress and learn more about transmission: <http://www.cfra.org/clean-energy-transmission-map>

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