

## Case Study: Orleans County, New York

During summer 2008, we approached the supervisors of the Towns of Shelby, Ridgeway, and Yates all located in Orleans County, New York. The towns had been approached by large wind power developers and plans for large-scale wind power projects had been drawn for adjacent towns. Land speculators had already signed land lease and land option agreements with landowners in towns next to Shelby, Ridgeway, and Yates. The towns needed a more defined way to regulate wind power development, to make sure that development in the future occurred responsibly and with lower impacts to the community than previously constructed projects in other parts of New York State.

Emergent crafted Wind Power Master Plans for the Towns of Shelby, Ridgeway, and Yates. The plans were created for each town individually, and then an overarching document was created to tie the three Wind Power Master Plans together. The documents included suggestions on a possible Wind Power Development Overlay District to be implemented through the towns' land use codes. Suggestions were made to amend the existing wind power regulations, or bylaws, to make them more accurate in protecting neighbors from the unwanted impacts of nearby wind turbines.

The Wind Power Master Plans have given the towns a clear vision of possible wind power development and have prepared the towns' leaders to accurately assess future wind power project proposals from large wind power development companies. There's a lot to know about wind power in order to make the appropriate decisions on where turbines are located and how they are constructed; the easy-to-understand framework of our Wind Power Master Plans allow town leaders and community members to educate themselves on wind power issues in order to make informed decisions.

Ridgeway, Shelby, and Yates have considered utilizing federal and state incentives to attempt municipally supported community wind power projects at various locations within the towns – these locations were suggested within the Master Plans. The towns have not yet decided to move forward with municipal government sponsored projects, but have expressed optimism for privately developed projects within the towns. The Wind Power Master Plan has equipped the towns with the necessary tools to manage these private entities to ensure responsible development practices from securing the land through construction and operation.

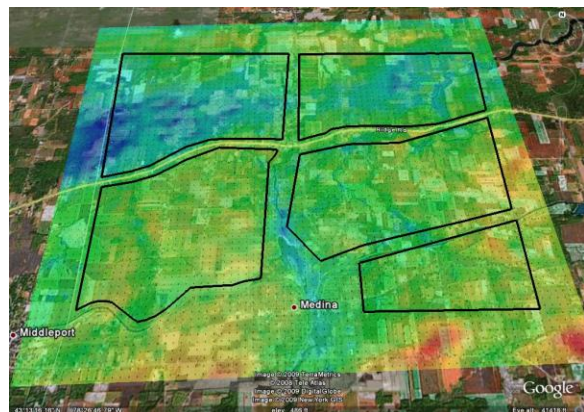


Figure: Wind Map of Ridgeway