

When watching the news on television, do you ever find yourself zoning out when they report on events happening on a continent halfway across the globe?

I know I do. As soon as I start hearing about a currency crisis in a country I can't even pronounce, I usually flip the channel to *The Andy Griffith Show* re-runs. It's not that I'm cold and apathetic. I just struggle connecting what's going on in a vowel-less nation to my own life.

Truth be told, I sometimes feel that way about the wind industry also. Now, I know we're going to see each other in a little over a month, so before you make a note on your WINDPOWER show planner to hunt me down and give me an earful, let me explain.

Wind Systems is based out of a suburb of Birmingham, Alabama, about as far as anyone could get from a wind turbine here in the U.S. If you're deathly afraid of wind turbines, this is where you come to live an anxiety-free life (provided you're not equally as afraid of mosquitoes the size of several endangered species of predatory birds).

In that environment, it's easy to begin to feel like you're out-of-touch, like you're so far separated from the action that it can't possibly affect or influence your life.

Then it hits me. The wind industry is relevant in Alabama because *Wind Systems* is in Alabama. It's relevant here because of the manufacturing facilities located here, and the support industries located here.

I begin to think about a local event I attended last year advocating a stronger renewables presence in Alabama. I think about the group I recently encountered that is sponsoring a student turbine design competition in the Huntsville area. I think about how Alabama Power just last year signed one of the largest power purchase agreements on record. I think about how the recent approval of a HVDC transmission line is paving the way for wind power to travel to all parts of the Southeast — including Alabama.

This is all happening because of the advances that have already happened in the wind energy industry. Somehow, I had lost perspective on that. In regaining that perspective, I also revitalized my resolve.

Beyond the Deep South, I think it's easy for any of us in this industry to lose perspective, especially when things honestly aren't going that well.

In a few short weeks, we'll meet in Orlando for WINDPOWER 2015. In the past, I've talked about how this event often serves to give us the kick in the pants we need to regain our perspective and renew our purpose. Now, I'm wondering how much more beneficial it would be if we all took the time to assess and clarify our perspective before we arrive in Orlando.

As always, thanks for reading...



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Sisk'.

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