

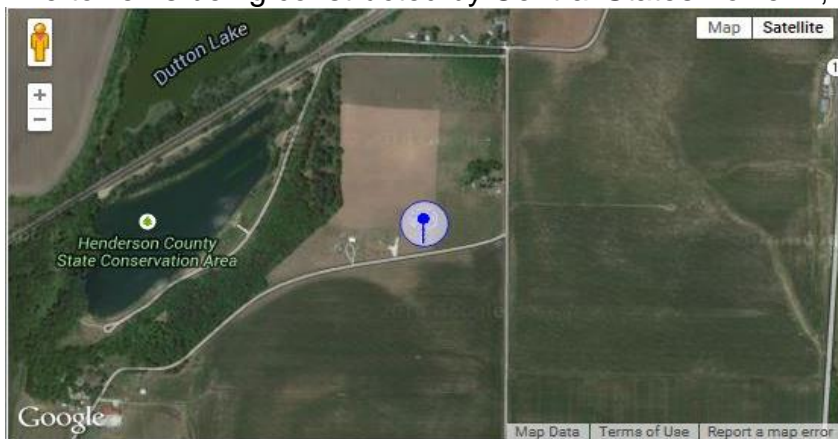
Gladstone, IL – Our Story  
<http://www.illinoisruralrights.com/>

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Let us tell you our story of how [IL Statute 55 ILCS 5/5-12001.1](#) has limited our rights. We live in a rural area just on the outside edge of Gladstone, IL. Many families are here as a result of multiple generations calling this land home. Some have started calling it home within the last 10 years because some of the agricultural land was broken up with the purpose of becoming residential. The land is rather sandy so the most successful crop to grow is alfalfa/hay. Everyone knows that you will not become wealthy farming in sand, so the ideal use of the land is for residential and/or hobby farms.

We are all fortunate to say we live by the Henderson County Conservation Area. This is also known by the name Gladstone Lake and even the “Sand Pit” by those really local. This State Park is small but the community is proud to have it. The old railroad created this lake by hauling sand to build the railroad through Henderson County. It then used the water from it to feed the steam engines. The state purchased the land from the railroad back in 1961 and not long ago it celebrated its 50 year anniversary being a State Park.

In 2015 we learned a local land owner, Judy Bielser, is looking to place a telecommunications tower on her property, Rural Rt 132D (+/- 600 feet west of Gladstone Lake Road and 1150E). The tower is being constructed by Central States Tower II, LLC out of Wheaton, IL.



This was a shock to several local residents since back in 2012 a zoning variance to relocate a commercial business was denied with Judy Bielser (Rural Rt 132D) being one of those residents strongly opposing. At the zoning appeals board meeting Judy and a couple other local residents stressed the desire to keep the local area all residential. They brought forward a concern for some of the Endangered Species found in the area and also the negative impact to the residential community and its future growth. That commercial business respected the opinion of the local residents and did not challenge the variance denial. “Due process” was granted as a change in Zoning was required so the public was invited to the Zoning Appeals board meeting.

Following are the reasons constructing a 255 foot telecommunications tower is just as much or more damaging to the neighborhood than a commercial business:

- There will be an impact to the natural habitat of the Gladstone Lake, whether it is to the 3 of 16 Endangered Species that reside there or a disruption in the fowl migration pathway. Every year we get to enjoy the geese and an occasional American Bald Eagle visiting the lake and neighboring property. The tower will taint the scenic view of entryway to the lake for campers, walkers, fishing, and family picnics. Plus those camping and fishing at night will get to stare at the blinking aerial lights.
- In the summer of 2015, a pair of American Kestrel falcons was rescued on property near the proposed tower site. Thanks to Quincy Raptor Rehabilitation Center they were able to be cared for and saved.
- There will be an impact to the property values for our neighborhood. The prices will drop as not many people will want to relocate their family close to a cell tower. This will completely stop all hope for any future residential development on the vacant land in our area.
- There are still concerns for public safety since the tower will be close to our fire district's radio antennae and fire station. The International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) has expressed their concern on placement of towers near residential areas and within proximity of fire stations.
- There are already 2 towers on Water Tower Road within 2 miles from proposed location. Were locations in that area considered? Was co-location considered as once a tower is built it is there forever (and protected by Federal Government forever).
- Again a precedent was already set from prior Zoning Appeals Board that this property would remain residential. Prior variance was denied as with this tower if "due process" was not denied, a Zoning Appeals Board meeting would have occurred for a height variance request.
- Henderson County heavily relies on property tax for its revenue. Adding a cell tower to this property will be a deterrent to future residential expansion in the area. Do you want to guess how much revenue this cell tower provides Henderson County?

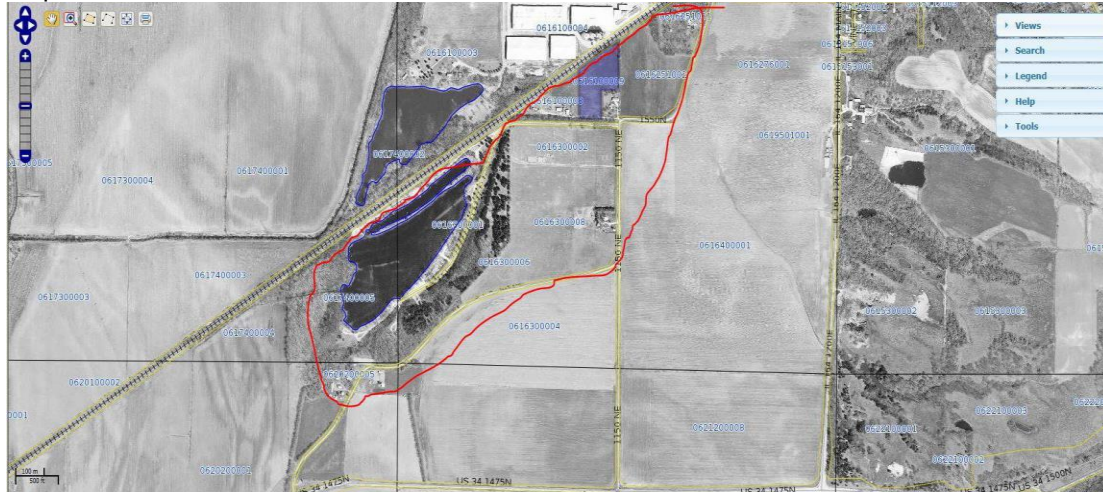
Unfortunately, the tower company and site consultants have a canned response to every concern. Even more unfortunate, local residents cannot even be heard due to our population size. The tower is automated granted a building permit without having to follow any local government zoning rules. The tower companies are not required to have the land "re-zoned". This is where we need your help! When 7 of the 9 Illinois landowners within a half mile radius say "No", that should not be ignored. A State Park should also be included in that count. Perhaps tower locations should not be within one mile of a State Park. Of course, some of the larger State Parks (1000+ acres) may want these types of services within their property boundaries; however, the Telecommunications industry should not be the ones who make that decision.

Here is the approximate timeline of our events:

- December 2014 – Legal notice #1 published in "The Hawk Eye" newspaper based out of Burlington, IA. This legal notice was for Central State Towers II, LLC proposing site and requesting any need for an environmental assessment. No neighboring residents were even aware of the notice at this point. Note there are two Henderson County, IL based papers that could have been used. If you live in Illinois why would you look at an Iowa newspaper for Illinois legal ads? FCC states that is OK. If you border another state please keep this in mind.
- February 2015 – Legal notice #2 published in "The Hawk Eye" newspaper based out of Burlington, IA. This legal notice was for Central State Towers III, LLC proposing site and requesting any impact to historic sites. At this point an Iowa resident brings it to the attention of one of the neighboring residents in Gladstone. Now we all become aware of what is being requested. Again note there are two Henderson

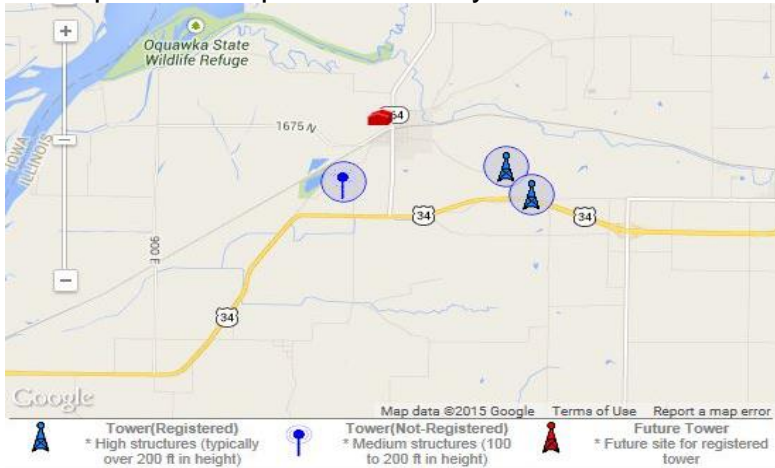
County, IL based papers that could have been used. If you live in Illinois why would you look at an Iowa newspaper for Illinois legal ads? FCC states that is OK.

- February 2015 – Neighboring residents (area circle in red) opposing specific location of tower send certified letter to EBI Consulting in response to the legal notice #2 mentioned above. We never received a response.



- March 2015 – Neighboring residents received certified letter from Insite RE, Inc. stating the intent of Central States Tower to construct a tower. When phone calls were answered, it was always a canned response with no consideration of locating to another site. At this time, we realized there were several companies in this process: Central States Tower, Central States Tower II, LLC (legal notice #1), Central States Tower III, LLC (legal notice #2), EBI Consulting (legal notice #2), and Insite, Inc. (site consultant and building permit request).
- Feb thru May 2015 – Opposing residents submitted copies of documentation to Zoning Officer and County Board members with intention of attending a Zoning Appeals Board. The Zoning Officer was informed by State's Attorney Scott McClintock that the building permit must be granted with no need of County approval. Even with the tower being within 1.5 miles of the Village of Gladstone, they were also denied any input on location.
- April thru May 2015 – Opposing residents contacted offices of Senator Sullivan, Representative Randy Frese, Representative Cheri Bustos, US State Attorney, IL DNR, and FCC regarding our concerns of not being able to be heard on this matter. There were phone and email exchanges but no other formal action. We obtained legal counsel which verified our limitations due to the [IL Statute 55 ILCS 5/5-12001.1](#).
- April 2015 - The Building Permit was granted from the Zoning Department with all local input silenced. Since then, we have exhausted all known means. We now seek a sponsor for a Bill to change this law so that small rural communities can be heard once again. Even though we cannot protect our own local park, maybe we can ensure that it does not happen to someone else in the future.

We are very much aware of other towers that exist near Gladstone. Drive approximately 2 miles from this proposed site location east of Gladstone and you will find two existing telecommunication towers on Water Tower Road. This tells us this proposed tower is more about profits than public necessity:



The companies building the towers offer attractive lease payments to lure landowners who have enough space to build a tower. The tower companies have no regard to the concerns of nearby residents or landmarks. It is a shame the site location consultants did not keep driving when they saw the sign “Henderson County Conservation Area”. I discarded the card they sent when I was notified of their interest as I know my father and grandfather did before me.

Here are the primary contacts for this tower being constructed: Mike Howley (630) 240-3253 from Insite RE, Inc. and Brian Meier (630) 221-8500 from Central States Tower II, LLC.

Nobody disputes the need for digital network to expand its footprint - just not next to a State Park, especially since the majority of Henderson County, IL is open agriculture land, much of it without homesteads.

For many, our land is our heritage. There is a code and standard that we live by and pass along to our children. We, though, cannot preserve this when our voices cannot be heard.

Thank you,

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