

# Chapter 16

Nate Romanowski encounters two striking sights after leaving Saratoga: the Teubner Fish Hatchery and the massive Buckbrush Wind Energy Project. The wind farm, with its hundreds of towering turbines, dominates the landscape, stretching across thousands of acres. Nate is awed by the scale of the construction, noting its potential to power a million homes in California. However, he is critical of the project's reliance on government mandates and tax incentives rather than market demand, highlighting the disconnect between energy consumers and the environmental impact of such facilities.

As Nate approaches the wind farm, he experiences physical discomfort from the turbines' subsonic hum and altered air pressure. He is stopped by a security guard who questions his presence. Nate reveals his falconry background, hinting at the turbines' threat to birds, but the guard dismisses his concerns. The encounter reinforces Nate's frustration with the project's unchecked expansion and the lack of awareness among those who benefit from it. His anger grows as he realizes how the wind farm aligns with his broader conspiracy theories about environmental and governmental overreach.

After being denied direct access to the fish hatchery, Nate spends hours navigating around the wind farm's perimeter. The sight of transmission lines stretching toward California deepens his resentment. He reflects on the irony of "green" energy displacing wildlife corridors and wishes policymakers and consumers could witness the project's true scale and consequences. Nate's disdain for the industrialization of natural spaces is palpable, though he acknowledges the futility of his anger, given his lack of authority to change the situation.

The chapter concludes with Nate arriving at the Teubner Fish Hatchery, puzzled by its remote location far from any natural water source. This final observation underscores the theme of human intervention disrupting natural order, mirroring his earlier critique

of the wind farm. Nate's journey serves as a vehicle for exploring tensions between progress and preservation, leaving readers to ponder the costs of renewable energy infrastructure in wild landscapes.

