

# Wind negatives outweigh positives

February 2, 2005  $\mid$  Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Section: Letters  $\mid$  555 Words

OpenURL Link

### To the Editor of THE EAGLE:

I read the letter from Nancy Nylen of the Center for Environment Technology letter Jan. 29 with great interest ("Wind must be part of energy mix.")

The average electric production of wind turbines is about 30 percent of their rated maximum production capacity. The New England power grid has a current capacity to produce 30,000 megawatts (mw) of electricity each day. The ill-proposed Hoosac Wind Project has a maximum capacity to produce 30 mw each day. Thus the maximum amount of electricity from Hoosac to enter the grid would be one tenth of one percent of the total capacity. Adjusting for the 30 percent efficiency factor it would be 33 one hundreth of one percent. That would not be even a dribble of impact.

For wind to equal the electricity output of the grid, there would be a need for 20,000 wind turbines, always operating a maximum capacity (which they don't) and if sited in 20 turbine-30 mw plants such as Hoosac that would call for 1,000 such wind plants. I wonder where they would be put.

The best sites for wind are here in the Berkshires and Cape Cod. There are 10-12 ridge line sites that could prove feasible -- certainly for the wind -- although access and property ownership has to be considered in that feasibility. So the possibility exists for 200 turbines on our pristine ridgelines in the Berkshires from North to South County.

Ms. Nylen states that wind farms "will not diminish the natural beauty of our region." Pray tell, what is "natural" about a 340-foot high turbine (the equivalent of a 34 story building with the blade circumference equal to the wing span and nose to tail dimensions of a Boeing 747) with a blade spinning at 180 mph? For those wind advocates who think wind turbines are beautiful, even they would have to concede that that beauty is not "natural."

Ms. Nylen states that renewable energy would "contribute to national security." That can only be a reference to the use of foreign oil. Only 2.45 percent of all electricity in the United States is produced by oil-fired electric plants. Even if all oil use for the production of electricity were eliminated that would leave a 97.55 percent dependency of foreign (and domestic) oil that is used for other purposes, most notably transportation (67 percent.)

It must be Ms. Nylen's humanitarian impulse that makes her concerned about the welfare of people living elsewhere than Berkshire County where "the impacts of mining, transporting, burning, and disposing of wastes from these fuels affects the people in communities across the country and beyond." Too bad she isn't thinking about the welfare of people in Clarksburg and North Adams that will have to look at those behemoths and suffer from the strobe effect in daytime and flashing lights at night.

Ms. Nylen notes that "impact and environmental review are essential." I agree, but Clarksburg and North Adams were never consulted as to our position on the Hoosac project. And if "environmental review" is "essential" why is it that CET recommended to the Massachusetts Environmental Protection Agency that a full Environmental Impact Review was unnecessary? I guess the writer cares more for wind power and people who don't live in Berkshire County than for those that do.

CLARK H. BILLINGS

# The writer is a North Adams city councilor.

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# Harnassing wind

February 1, 2005  $\mid$  Daily Hampshire Gazette [30 Day Embargo] (Northampton, MA)

Section: Editorial  $\mid$  550 Words

Page: A6 OpenURL Link

Wind power projects are becoming an important part of the energy mix around the globe and should be encouraged right here in the Bay State. We desperately need alternatives to fossil fuels, and wind power holds great promise.

Harnessing the wind these days goes far beyond the picturesque windmills that have dotted the Dutch landscape for centuries. Modern turbines reach 100 to 200 feet into the sky and many people consider them to be eyesores rather than tourist attractions. They dominate the landscape in the same way as 100-foot-tall electric transmission towers march along rights-of-way in our area.

Wind energy was carefully researched at the University of Massachusetts decades ago. There are now active wind farms across the United States and they are especially popular in Denmark, Germany, Holland and the United Kingdom. Wind farms range in size from half a dozen turbines to as many as several thousand in the famous Altamont Pass facility in California.

A number of environmental issues have been raised about the enormous turbines that capture wind energy. Some experts say the turbines are a danger to migratory birds. People are concerned about the sound of the turbines scaring away fish around off-shore installations. Some neighbors of existing projects complain of the constant sound. Opponents of a proposed wind farm in the Berkshires allege that it threatens wetlands.

While legitimate environmental issues related to wind farms merit careful study, we should ignore the unsupported opinions of high-profile NIMBYs who oppose wind farms simply because they would spoil the view from their backyards. Sen. Edward Kennedy may have legitimate environmental concerns about the Cape Cod Associates wind farm proposal for 130 turbines in Nantucket Sound, but keep in mind that the "Kennedy Compound" in Hyannis overlooks the sound.

Attorney Gen. Thomas Reilly and Gov. Mitt Romney have also spoken against the Cape Cod project, largely at the behest of influential friends with property on Nantucket Sound. Romney suggests that Boston Harbor would be a better locale for a wind farm. Although the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers earlier rejected Boston Harbor for a project on the Cape Wind Associates scale due to shipping congestion, experts say a smaller farm could be accommodated. Among the many existing European projects is one in Copenhagen harbor with 20 turbines.

In the Berkshires, there are proposals for several wind energy projects on a much smaller scale than the Cape Cod project. The Hoosac Wind Project, which would place 20 turbines on Bakke Mountain in Florida and Crum Hill in Monroe, is now headed to court after a meeting in Springfield last week failed to resolve differences among the wind energy company, the state Department of Environmental Protection and a citizen group that opposes the project. Florida voters approved the project in 2003 and town officials have signed a 40-year lease with the company.

All these were also concerns in Denmark when the Horns Reef wind farm was erected along a popular tourist beach, but residents and visitors have grown accustomed to the sight. Some now consider it beautiful and a tourist attraction. We may not all agree that wind turbines are beautiful, but a quantity of them in appropriate places must be a key component of any energy policy. For environmental, economic and political reasons America needs to be less dependent on fossil fuels, particularly oil. Wind power can help us achieve that independence.

# • Citation (aglc Style)

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By RICHIE DAVIS Recorder Staff ORANGE -- In a corner of town best known for the annual North Quabbin Garlic and Arts Festival, a fledgling wind-energy company hopes to set up three wind turbines designed to produce 4.5 megawatts of electricity.

January 27, 2005 | Recorder, The [30 Day Embargo] (Greenfield, MA) 984 Words
OpenURL Link

Minuteman Wind of Waltham plans to erect a 150-foot-tall meteorological tower this spring, to test wind speed and direction for the project, perched atop Chestnut Hill. With a special permit in hand from the town Planning Board, company President Lawrence W. Plitch said he hopes the tower can be set up by mid-March, with a "best-case scenario" for the three 1.5-megawatt turbines to be in place sometime by the fall of 2006.

Minuteman received its special permit from the Planning Board in November, after a public hearing during which just a handful of neighbors raised questions about noise, visibility and impact on the three-acre site owned by Michael Yohan of New Salem, according to board Chairman Bruce Scherer.

"I think you could say the neighborhood was generally in favor," said Scherer, adding that at three or four neighborhood meetings, Plitch fielded a host of questions on topics from traffic to effects on wildlife. "I think these people, if they're honest brokers of information, are willing to be good corporate neighbors."

The "third-generation" turbines would be placed on 250-foot towers atop the 1,200-foot hill, their variable-speed blades reaching more than 350 feet above the surface. They could generate about 12,000 megawatt-hours a year -- enough for about 1,200 homes, according to information provided by Plitch. The project would connect to the grid along existing Massachusetts Electric Co. rights of way.

The Orange project is a fraction of the size of a 20-turbine proposal currently being considered for Florida and Monroe, which would generate 30 megawatts. That Hoosac Wind project, proposed by enXco Corp., has been stalled by an appeal by a residents' group, which argues that more environmental analysis is needed because proposed access roads will cross 11 streams. A prescreening conference was scheduled for Tuesday before a Department of Environmental Protection hearing officer.

Minuteman's Plitch said he has applied to the Federal Aviation Administration for a "determination of no hazard" for the towers, which he estimated are about three miles from the Orange Airport. Depending on the results of the meteorological tests, Minuteman will decide on whether to proceed with applying to the state and to a variety of town boards to build the turbines on the site, where it has a long-term lease from Yohan.

At Seeds of Solidarity Farm, a nonprofit education center that uses solar greenhouses as well as photo-voltaic equipment to provide all its electricity, and which uses biodiesel fuel for vehicles and farm equipment, Ricky Baruc said the wind project would be a welcome addition to a neighborhood that comes together around the annual garlic festival, solstice parties and "a spirit of cooperation" that includes an appreciation of Seeds of Solidarity's efforts to teach about renewable energy technologies.

Although most of the neighbors seem enthused by the idea, he said, some abutters are balking.

"There are a lot of misconceptions, and I think a lot of it has to do with the whole Not in my backyard' thing," he said. "If we can't make the wind work for us, the most natural thing that's out there, we're doomed."

Penelope Sullivan, who lives closest to the site, said her main concern is whether the wind turbine will be visible from her home, and no one has been able to assure her it will not.

"The one thing we really enjoy here is a sense of wilderness," said Sullivan, who has lived there for 16 years. "Out

back, there's nothing for miles and miles. We like the feeling of being on the edge of the wilderness. "

Sullivan, who worries that she and her husband would suddenly find themselves "in an industrial complex," in which the hawks that now circle in upward drafts might be chased away or the night sky they enjoy might be spoiled if a red light is required on the turbines.

Stefan Maier, who guesses he lives a quarter mile from the site, said, "I look on it as a real pro-active step in the right direction," in which people who depend on electricity can take responsibility for living with its generation.

Maier, who said he has visited a similar-sized wind project in his hometown in Germany, said there's very little noise, and he doubted that residents will even be able to see the turbine.

"I don't think it will be an intrusion," he said. "But if there's a small inconvenience, it may be well worth it."

Minuteman, a startup company, is proposing the Orange projects as one of a handful of sites around southern New England, the others of which Plitch refused to name. Plitch has more than 20 years of sustainable energy project development, much of it as vice president and general counsel for Wheelabrator Technologies Inc., which has developed biomass and other renewable energy projects in a dozen states. He is founder and president of the Northeast Energy and Commerce Association and has served as general counsel of the state's Energy Facilities Siting Council.

Epsilon Associates, the Maynard engineering and environmental firm that will handle permitting for the Orange project, has a long track record of various renewable energy projects, including the Princeton Municipal Light Department's wind farm.

"Wind energy is the fastest-growing energy technology in the world," said Plitch, noting that the state's requirement that utilities generate at least 5 percent of their electricity by using renewable technologies is helping to drive development of wind turbines in the state. And small-scale, community based projects like the Chestnut Hill proposal are more efficient and secure than massive projects like Cape Wind, which is attempting to build a group of 130 turbines in Nantucket Sound, with a total maximum output of 420 megawatts. In average conditions, backers say, that wind park will produce enough electricity to power three-quarters of the Cape and Islands.

"At some point in time, we have to try and have our energy resources come from indigenous resources," said Plitch, adding that his project would also boost the local economy.

"One thing western Mass. has is wind. Let's take advantage of it."

You can reach Richie Davis at: rdavis@recorder.com or (413) 772-0261 Ext. 269

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# Wind project appeal gets formal hearing

January 26, 2005 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Author: Christopher Marcisz Berkshire Eagle Staff| Section: City & Town| 499 Words OpenURL Link

FLORIDA -- After a 2 1/2-hour, closed-door hearing in Springfield yesterday, the dispute over wetlands conditions for the Hoosac Wind project will proceed to a formal administrative law proceeding.

Yesterday's meeting with state Department of Environmental Protection officials was the last chance for a settlement before the case moves to an administrative law proceeding.

It also comes as 28 Berkshire County residents from outside the town of Florida have asked to join the proceedings to block the project.

They are in addition to the 10 town residents who appealed a decision in November by DEP to allow the 20-turbine, wind-power project to proceed.

DEP spokeswoman Elizabeth Stinehart said the appellants and project developers met at about noon, and that the meeting broke up about 2 1/2 hours later.

She said the parties could not reach a conclusion, and that the matter now goes to the Division of Administrative Law Appeals.

"It is my understanding that in the next couple of weeks the case will be sent up," Stinehart said.

The case will be heard by an administrative magistrate in Boston.

In 2004, the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs' Office of Administrative Appeals -- which had heard appeals such as this -- was merged into the Division of Administrative Law Appeals, a separate agency.

At issue is the "superseding set of conditions" DEP placed on the project last fall after a group of residents challenged the town Conservation Commission's wetlands protection conditions.

Eleven of the project's turbines will be placed on Florida's Bakke Mountain. The remaining nine will be on Crum Hill in Monroe.

DEP's conditions reduced the impact area and the length of culvert piping for the roads.

Ten residents appealed that decision, in the case now before the board.

The project is being developed by California-based developer enXco, and company officials hope to begin work this year.

However, opponents continue to raise concerns about the wind turbines' effect on the natural beauty of the region, and say their energy-supplying potential has been exaggerated.

Late last week, 28 residents filed a motion to intervene in the proceedings as an "interested party."

In a statement, Eleanor Tillinghast, of the environmental group Green Berkshires, said Hoosac Wind and the state have not done enough.

"We want to participate in the proceedings because we believe the Hoosac project will cause significant environmental damage, the proponent has failed to provide essential information, and the state has done an inadequate job of limiting project impacts," she said in a statement.

They note construction of the turbines will entail cutting four miles of road through mature forest, crossing streams and wetlands, to build turbines along a major migratory route for birds.

They also say one stream in the project area flows into a pond holding brook trout, and feeds into Dunbar Brook, which is a cold-water fishery.

Stinehart confirmed that the motion to intervene was received Monday, and said there was no word on whether it had been accepted.

On the Web: www.hoosacwind.com, and www.greenberkshires.org .

Christopher Marcisz can be reached at cmarcisz@berkshireeagle.com or at (413) 664-4995.

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### Wind mediation fails

January 26, 2005 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Author: Ben Rubin North Adams Transcript | Section: unknown | 669 Words OpenURL Link

NORTH ADAMS -- After a long appeal process, project assessments and re-assessments, a disputed Florida wind farm project will wind up in a state court since a final attempt to avert a court hearing failed this week.

A prescreening conference was held on Tuesday by the state Department of Environmental Protection to try to reach an agreement -- without having to go to court -- between the department, the wind project company and an appealing party of Florida residents.

The conference was held at the department office in Springfield and resulted in no agreement.

The \$40 million Hoosac Wind Project, proposed by California-based enXco, plans to build 20 turbines on Bakke Mountain in Florida and Crum Hill in Monroe.

The project has been appealed twice by a group of 10 Florida residents, both times on the grounds of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act, saying that project construction would damage wetlands in the proposed building area.

The Florida group appealed the town conservation commission's approval of the project and then the state department's approval.

"All the parties agreed that it needs to go forward to the next step, which is to the administrative magistrate," said Elizabeth Stinehart, a department deputy regional director.

The Division of Administrative Law Appeals, an independent state magistrate, will hear the case after the department completes some paperwork and sends the case to the division in a few weeks, said Stinehart. After that, a court hearing will be scheduled, she said.

Because the appeal is about wetlands, Stinehart said any decision made by DALA "doesn't advocate or detract" from the turbines being built, and would only impact the area of the project that would affect wetlands.

Eleanor Tillinghast, spokeswoman for the Florida appellants and the group Green Berkshires, said the conference was "cordial" [see Tillinghast's commentary on wind farms on page A4].

Tillinghast said the meeting mostly consisted of several lawyers from different sides discussing the procedures of the appeal, as well as talk about construction and operation of the turbines in regard to wetlands issues. There was also discussion on the impact of the turbines on natural habitats and birds' migratory routes, she said.

Hoosac Wind spokesman Sam Bittman could not be reached for comment by press time.

Department spokesman Joseph Ferson said the appellants were represented by Pittsfield environmental lawyer Robert Lucido of Aaronson & Lucido, and enXco was represented by Boston environmental lawyer Gregor McGregor of McGregor & Associates.

Tillinghast said she counted eight lawyers in the packed department room -- four representing enXco, two representing the appellants, one representing Florida and one representing the state.

The two appellant lawyers were also representing another party, consisting of 28 state residents who filed a motion

on Monday with the department to officially take part in the hearing. Tillinghast said the group will be able to present evidence in a case and will receive all documents submitted for the case.

The residents are from Adams, Brighton, Clarksburg, Mount Washington, North Adams, Rowe and Williamstown. Tillinghast said more residents' names are being collected and added to the group.

To explain the purpose of this extra group attending the hearings, Tillinghast said, "It's an additional party saying, 'We too are concerned'" about wind projects in the area, and want to add to the voices of the appellants.

"We want to participate in the proceedings because we believe the Hoosac project will cause significant environmental damage, the proponent has failed to provide essential information and the state has done an inadequate job of limiting project impact," Tillinghast wrote in a Monday press release.

Green Berkshires is opposing other potential wind projects throughout the Berkshires, saying that more research on environmental impact and turbine visibility needs to be made before these projects are built. The Florida group spokeswoman, Monica Wissman, said she wants to keep Florida land pristine and untouched.

The town of Florida backed the project strongly, with a majority of townspeople voting for the project in a town election in May 2003 and town officials signing a 40-year lease for enXco to use Bakke Mountain for the wind farm in November.

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# The dark sides of wind power

January 26, 2005 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Author: Eleanor Tillinghast | Section: Columnists | 860 Words OpenURL Link

Noise may not be your first concern when looking at wind turbines, but for neighbors, it is tormenting. Dave Pevec, who lives more than a quarter-mile from the Waymart wind power plant in rural Pennsylvania, complains that the noise keeps him awake at night.

"It sounds like an airport ... my peace is gone forever."

Lou Orehek, whose family lives nearby, says, "It is the opinion of members of my family that the windmills generate a low frequency 'grind'... and this noise travels more than 7,000 feet."

In New York, Pastor Kathleen Danley lives two good-size fields from the Fenner wind-power plant, and describes the noise as "a loud clothes dryer; that would probably be the closest sound, that constant turning sound."

She explains, "We were told that the windmills had been redesigned so as not to be noisy, but the grinding noise goes on 24 hours a day (when they are operating) and at times is far worse than other times."

In Michigan, Kelly Alexander lives a quarter-mile from the Mackinaw City turbines. The low frequency sound creates a drumming that penetrates the walls of his home. Even with doors and windows tightly closed, there is no way to escape it. His 80-year-old mother lives next door. The noise keeps her awake at night.

Sister Chris at St. Anthony's Catholic Church, more than a mile to the north, says that when the turbines are started up, she can hear a loud whoosh that is startling.

In West Virginia, Paula Stahl describes hiking up to the Mountaineer turbines. "The noise was incredible. It surprised me. It sounded like airplanes or helicopters. And it traveled. Sometimes you could not hear the sound standing right under one, but you heard it 3,000 yards down the hill, where the wind carried the sound."

Waymart and Fenner have 1.5-megawatt General Electric turbines like the ones planned for the Hoosac wind power plant in the towns of Florida and Monroe, Massachusetts. The Mountaineer turbines are the same size. The Mackinaw turbines are slightly smaller.

Sunlight strobing through spinning wind-turbine blades is also distressing to neighbors. "When the sun is setting, it shines through the blades, causing severe flashing in our house," complains a homeowner near the Lincoln wind-power plant in Wisconsin.

"We get a 'strobe effect' throughout our house and over our entire property (40 acres)," says a neighbor. Others add, "shadows are cast over the ground and affect my balance," and "shadows from the blades sweep over our house and yard and ruin our quality of life."

Physical reactions are pronounced. In England, where the effects of windpower plants have been widely documented, Dave Brierley, a former policeman living in Cumbria, says, "I live 1,000 meters south of the wind farm and my wife, who is asthmatic, gets very distressed when the wind is coming from the north because she can feel her breathing trying to synchronize with the thump of the blades."

A newspaper article titled, Wind farms 'make people sick who live up to a mile away' reports on the findings of Dr. Amanda Harry: All but one of 14 people living near a wind-power plant in Cornwall have experienced increased numbers of headaches, and 10 said that they have had problems sleeping, and suffered from anxiety.

She says, "People demonstrated a range of symptoms from headaches, migraines, nausea, dizziness, palpitations and tinnitus to sleep disturbance, stress, anxiety and depression."

People living near wind turbines aren't the only ones affected. Constantly flashing lights on turbine hubs can be seen for miles. One observer of the Waymart facility describes "the multitude of red blinking aircraft warning lights that now trace across the ridge top at night."

Federal law requires Enxco to fit the 20 Hoosac turbines with flashing white lights during the day, and flashing red lights at night.

What about the effect on property values? Despite claims by wind-power supporters that turbines have no depressive effect on nearby home sales, there's a lot of evidence to the contrary in areas where the landscape is the attraction. At a public meeting on Enxco's proposal for a wind power plant in Lowell, Vt., a Realtor trying to sell a farm near the site told a company representative that his assertion that land values won't decrease is 'ludicrous.'

Don Maclure said that when he tells people interested in buying the farm about the proposed project he never hears from them again.

In England, newspaper articles highlight the problem with such titles as "Wind turbines made our home unsellable," "Wind farms stunt growth of property value," and "Potential losses could run into millions."

People in Florida and Monroe voted for the Hoosac project before they had a chance to learn about its effects. Their neighbors on Tilda Hill Road and nearby areas will undoubtedly suffer.

Sportsmen and hikers will notice the noise, vibration, sun strobing and flashing lights. Snowmobilers and skiers will risk ice hurled from spinning blades.

Residents of Clarksburg, North Adams, and Williamstown will be unable to escape the visual blight of the magnificent Hoosac range. How will the towns of Florida and Monroe compensate all those people for the damage to their quality of life?

Eleanor Tillinghast of Mount Washington is co-founder of Green Berkshires Inc., a group formed to oppose windpower projects.

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# Hearing slated on wind project

January 24, 2005 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Author: Christopher Marcisz Berkshire Eagle Staff| Section: Headlines | 523 Words OpenURL Link

FLORIDA -- The two sides in the dispute over a wind power project planned for the towns of Florida and Monroe are preparing for a hearing tomorrow to determine whether a complaint against the project should proceed.

Meanwhile, another wind project may be in the works in the town of Savoy, where a landowner has agreed to let a wind developer explore the possibility of installing turbines there.

A group of 10 Florida residents appealed a decision in November by the state Department of Environmental Protection to allow the 20-turbine Hoosac Wind project to proceed.

The hearing will not be open to the public and will be held at the DEP's office in Springfield at noon tomorrow.

DEP spokeswoman Eva Tor described the process as "the last chance at a settlement" before the appeal goes to the state Division of Administrative Law Appeals.

The conference will be presided over by a DEP official, who will help determine the "legal merits and potential resolutions" of the complaint.

On hand will be officials of the Hoosac Wind project, along with the appellants.

Tor said that settlement discussions could continue beyond tomorrow, but that "if it doesn't look like there is potential for a settlement, they won't go past that day."

In early November, the DEP issued a "superseding set of conditions" for the project after a group of 29 residents challenged the town Conservation Commission's conditions because of concerns about wetlands protections.

Eleven of the project's turbines will be placed on Florida's Bakke Mountain. Each would be 213 feet from the ground to the blade hub and 320 feet at the vertical extension of the rotor blades.

The remaining nine turbines will be placed on Crum Hill in Monroe.

The DEP ordered the project to reduce the proposed impact area for the turbines from its original 3,600 square feet to 1,506 square feet, and to reduce the length of culvert piping from 375 feet to 50 feet.

However, at the deadline for appealing the DEP's decision, a 10 residents -- the minimum necessary to file -- appealed, saying that the state had not done enough to protect wetlands resources.

Developers are confident that they have adequately addressed residents' concerns.

Hoosac Wind spokesman Sam Bittman said project officials remain confident that they can begin work this spring.

Wind power has emerged as an explosive issue in North County. Supporters say that it is an important step in moving the nation's energy supply away from fossil fuels, and point to the tax and lease payments it will bring to towns.

Opponents insist that the turbines will ruin the natural beauty of the Berkshires, and that their potential for supplying electricity to the region has been exaggerated.

Earlier this month, it was learned that the owners of 193 acres on Harwood Road in Savoy had signed a three-year lease agreement with Minuteman Wind LLC, a Waltham-based wind-power developer.

The lease will allow the company to do a wind feasibility study with a temporary meteorological tower on the West Hill ridge line to determine if it wants to proceed with building turbines.

Material from the North Adams Transcript was used in this story. Christopher Marcisz can be reached at cmarcisz@berkshireeagle.com or at (413) 664-4995.

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Christopher Marcisz Berkshire Eagle Staff, 'Hearing slated on wind project', *Berkshire Eagle, The* (online), 24 Jan 2005 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/107D67A39AC2AB9F">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/107D67A39AC2AB9F</a>



# Readsboro eyed for wind turbines

January 14, 2005 | Bennington Banner (VT)
Author: CATE LECUYER North Adams Transcript | Section: Today's Headlines | 968 Words
OpenURL Link

READSBORO -- The wind power company enXco is seeking to build up to 25 wind turbines on federal land off Route 8 in Readsboro, a proposal that would not require the public's approval and would not generate revenue for the town.

At a select board meeting on Tuesday, officials announced the proposed wind project that would generate approximately 750 megawatts of energy - enough to meet the annual electrical needs for 10,000 to 13,000 New England homes. The wind farm up the road in Searsburg has only 11 smaller turbines that produce one-third the energy.

Officials said the new project will involve the construction of 20 to 25 wind turbines divided as evenly as possible along both sides of a 2-mile stretch of Route 8. They will not be visible from Readsboro on the western side of the highway, but they will be visible on the eastern side, and in response to FAA regulations, the turbines will require lights at the highest points every half mile, meaning three to four lights on each side of the highway.

The turbines will also be built along the upper ridges where the wind is at its strongest, on land that is owned by the U.S. National Forest Service. According to Gina Owens at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, because the proposal involves building on federal land, Readsboro will not have the power to decide whether or not this project is a go.

"We pay very close attention to what people say, but the ultimate decision does not depend upon a town vote. It rests on our supervisor at the Forest Service," Owens said.

She said a wind farm on federal property also means the town would not receive increased revenue associated with similar projects, such as the Hoosac Wind Power Project in Florida and Monroe in Massachusetts.

In 2003, officials for that project said the facility would bring in \$32,000 in annual tax revenues to the two towns, as well as \$120,000 in annual lease payments.

"Because it is public land we don't pay property taxes," Owens said. She said the National Forest Service already pays Readsboro a fixed amount that equals out to approximately 25 percent of the profits from the land. She said the fixed amount may rise slightly as a result of the windmills, but felt it was too early to determine the extent of their impact.

Although this project will encompass both Readsboro and Searsburg, and will look like an expansion of the Searsburg wind farm already in place, officials say it will be a separate project because it will involve a separate company.

It will also be a much larger project.

Owens said Deerfield Wind, an organization owned by enXco, a California-based wind energy company, submitted the proposal. According to John Zimmerman of Vermont Environmental Research Associates, a managing company hired by enXco, windmill technology has advanced since the installation of the turbines in Searsburg in 1997.

"What are up in Searsburg now are 550-kilowatt turbines," Zimmerman said. "The newer turbines are 1,500 kilowatts. If we were to do the Searsburg project today, we would use four turbines instead of 11 for the same results."

More power also means bigger windmills, spaced farther apart. According to Zimmerman, the turbines at Searsburg are 132 feet high, and the new windmills would be almost twice that height at 210 to 220 feet, with larger rotor blades. Zimmerman said the base towers would remain the same diameter, so the windmills would look tall and lean, and turn at a slower pace.

"These would wind up looking, from an aesthetic point of view, more graceful," he said. The new height also means they would have to be lit at the highest point every half mile to avoid plane crashes.

According to Bob Bayer of the Forest Service, aesthetics is one of the issues the agency will consider when making a decision about whether or not to allow the project.

Bayer said Deerfield Wind needs a special-use permit from the National Forest Service in order to continue with the proposal, and the National Forest Service will conduct an environmental impact analysis to determine if they should issue the permit.

Bayer said one visual consideration involves the cutting down of trees and, according to Zimmerman, this should not be a major problem.

"The concern early on was to put turbines on the ridge line you would have to clear cut the forests, and the fact is you don't," Zimmerman said. He said there would be minimal clearing in a circle around each turbine, and along the roads that would have to be built in order to connect the turbines to each other.

He said the project would also use services already installed at the Searsburg site.

"The electricity lines are buried underneath the road so it requires no additional clearing," he said.

In addition to avoiding eyesores, Bayer said the National Forest Service will look at the economic effect the project will have on the area electric grid, and how it will affect nearby homes.

"Someone might decide it's too close to the road and we have some highway concerns," he said.

Wildlife issues will also be a factor of the environmental impact report, Bayer said, and will focus particularly on the natural habitats of birds, bats and black bears in the area.

Bayer said they hope to begin the analysis around Feb. 4, and will be looking for public input throughout the process.

"We will address everyone's concerns 100 percent," he said.

He said the National Forest Service hopes to reach a decision by late spring or early summer of 2006, and after that the public will have up to 30 days to appeal the process.

Informational meetings are scheduled from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Whitingham School in Jacksonville on Feb. 15, the Grand Summit Hotel at Mount Snow on Feb. 16, and the Howe Center in Rutland on Feb. 17.

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# Agreement is completed to lease Fla. wind farm site

January 13, 2005 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Author: Cate Lecuyer North Adams Transcript | Section: Today's Headlines | 495 Words OpenURL Link

FLORIDA -- New England Wind, LLC, part of the California-based wind energy company enXco, recently finalized a 40-year leasing agreement with the town of Florida in order to pursue the Hoosac Wind Power Project.

The \$40 million project proposes 20 turbines on Bakke Mountain in Florida and Crum Hill in Monroe, which would produce 30 megawatts of energy to the New England area grid and power 9,000 homes annually.

According to Florida Town Administrator Susan Brown, the lease was signed in late November and was filed with the Northern Berkshire Registry of Deeds and made available to the public on Monday, Jan. 10.

Brown verified the agreement requires enXco to make a pre-operating payment of \$2,000, with set quarterly payments of \$2,800 or 2.5 percent of the profits generated from the sale of the electricity -- whichever is greater.

EnXco will also pay property taxes on the land, which should bring in approximately \$150,000 to \$200,000 in tax revenues for the towns.

According to John Zimmerman of Vermont Environmental Research Associates, a company hired by enXco to manage wind projects on the east coast, the lease agreement will help speed up the process once a decision is made in regard to an appeal sent in on Nov. 23, the day of the appeal deadline.

"It means the town agrees and wants the project to go forward," he said. At a town election in May 2003, the wind proposal received 170 votes in favor of the project and 47 votes against it, with 48 percent of the residents voting. Although the project has mostly received local support, a group of 10 Florida residents, led by Monica Wissman, appealed on the grounds of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act.

Attorneys will meet on Jan. 25 before a state Department of Environmental Protection hearing officer to try to reach an agreement. Zimmerman said that although all regulations set forth by the department have been followed, he does not regret the more detailed environmental reviews initiated as a result of the appeals.

"I think it ended up having a better project for that effort," he said, saying the project will now impact less of the wetlands. If the appeal is rejected, enXco hopes to begin construction on the project by late May, and to have the turbines up and running by the end of 2005.

With advanced technologies and larger windmills, the Hoosac project will generate more than four times the energy of the existing Searsburg, Vt., wind farm established in 1997. [See related story, page A1].

The 6-megawatt wind farm, run by Green Mountain Power, provides power to 2,000 households, and was once the largest wind facility in the eastern part of the country. With the rising costs of coal and fossil fuels, wind farms seem to be springing up around New England, and it may soon be dwarfed by the Hoosac project, a proposed Searsburg expansion project in Readsboro, and a proposed 10-turbine project on Brodie Mountain, which will produce between 3.75 to 15 megawatts of energy.

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# 25 wind turbines planned for site

January 13, 2005 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Author: Cate Lecuyer North Adams Transcript | Section: Today's Headlines | 976 Words OpenURL Link

READSBORO, Vt. -- The wind power company enXco is seeking to build up to 25 wind turbines on federal land off of Route 8 in Readsboro, a proposal that would not require the public's approval and would not generate revenue for the town.

At a select board meeting on Tuesday, officials announced the proposed wind project that would generate approximately 750 megawatts of energy -- enough to meet the annual electrical needs for 10,000 to 13,000 New England homes. The wind farm up the road in Searsburg has only 11 smaller turbines that produce one third the energy.

Officials said the new project will involve the construction of 20 to 25 wind turbines divided as evenly as possible along both sides of a 2-mile stretch of Route 8. They will not be visible from Readsboro on the western side of the highway, but they will be visible on the eastern side, and in response to FAA regulations, the turbines will require lights at the highest points every half mile, meaning three to four lights on each side of the highway.

The turbines will also be built along the upper ridges where the wind is at its strongest, on land that is owned by the U.S. National Forest Service. According to Gina Owens at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, because the proposal involves building on federal land, Readsboro will not have the power to decide whether or not this project is a go.

"We pay very close attention to what people say, but the ultimate decision does not depend upon a town vote. It rests on our supervisor at the Forest Service," Owens said.

She said a wind farm on federal property also means the town would not receive increased revenue associated with similar projects, such as the Hoosac Wind Power Project in Florida and Monroe in Massachusetts.

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It will also be a much larger project.

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Bayer said they hope to begin the analysis around Feb. 4, and will be looking for public input throughout the process.

"We will address everyone's concerns 100 percent," he said.

He said the National Forest Service hopes to reach a decision by late spring or early summer of 2006, and after that the public will have up to 30 days to appeal the process.

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# Energy star - Cowell, CSG save money, aid environment

January 4, 2005 | Worcester Telegram & Gazette (MA) Author: Rushmie Kalke | Section: BUSINESS | 1108 Words

Page: E1 OpenURL Link

WESTBORO - Stephen L. Cowell, chairman and chief executive officer of Conservation Services Group Inc., has found a way to both run a business and make the world a better place.

Honored last September as a "Champion of Energy" by the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy, Mr. Cowell, 54, has dedicated most of his professional career to energy efficiency. "I wanted a career that meant something in terms of social change to make the world better for everyone," he said.

After graduating from Brown University in 1972 with an urban affairs degree, his initial career interest was in developing low-income housing, but he said the 1970s energy crisis made him realize energy was a major problem for the country.

Mr. Cowell worked as the director of the Massachusetts Office of Citizen Participation for several years, where he designed and managed the Massachusetts Conservation Assistance Fund. The fund provided energy conservation services to 200,000 low-income households.

In 1984, Mr. Cowell founded CSG, a nonprofit corporation, to help utility companies, public housing authorities, private sector companies and residential customers lower energy costs through energy efficiency and renewable energy programs.

CSGServices Inc., an affiliated for-profit company, was co-founded by Mr. Cowell and President Adam Parker in 2000, expanding the company's opportunities to offer customized energy efficiency alternatives to customers.

Mr. Cowell said 2003 sales for both companies were a total \$40 million, in line with sales generated over the last four years. The companies netted \$500,000 in combined profits last year.

Over the last 20 years, CSG and CSGServices, through their energy conservation projects, have generated about \$1 billion in energy efficiency and renewable energy work, reducing pollution and demand for power.

Mr. Cowell said the success of building the company's energy efficiency efforts hinged on the cooperation of utility companies. He said there had been no institutions in place to ease energy conservation and his mission was to change the system.

One result of his vision is a successful partnership between CSG and Massachusetts Electric Co., which is part of Westboro-based National Grid USA.

CSG is one of several vendors hired by Massachusetts Electric to provide to customers energy efficiency services such as energy audits and incentives for building and installing Energy Star-rated homes and appliances, said Laura Goldberg McNaughton, a manager for residential energy efficiency at Massachusetts Electric.

"The energy efficiency programs have helped customers save considerable amounts of energy. There is significant participation in the Worcester area," she said.

Ms. McNaughton said about 65 percent of the company's Massachusetts customers participate in the energy efficiency program, resulting in annual savings of \$160 million in electricity bills. The program, in preventing the utility's production of that extra energy, reduced annual emissions by 1.2 million tons, or the equivalent of

removing 150,000 vehicles from the roadways, she said.

"Steve Cowell is a real leader in encouraging energy efficiency locally, regionally and nationally," she said. "I give him a lot of credit."

Shawn Dolan, a Stoughton resident, called CSG to conduct an energy audit after hearing a radio promotion about the services in October. The audit revealed that insulating his home would reduce energy costs, so he hired CSG to perform the insulation services. The Massachusetts Electric incentive program paid for 50 percent of Mr. Dolan's insulation services up to \$1,500.

"I have recommended this to other people," Mr. Dolan said. "The crew (members) who came out did a great job. It was done all in one day, which was terrific. The process was very easy and turnaround time from when I called them was quick. The incentive program made it a great deal. I saved a ton of money."

In addition to energy efficiency, CSG has been focused on promoting renewable energy sources such as solar, wind and hydropower.

CSG is involved with the Hoosac Wind Project, a 30-megawatt wind power facility to be located on two ridgelines in the northwestern Massachusetts towns of Monroe and Florida. The wind power generated by the project will be included in Greener Watts New England, a renewable energy program offered by CSG and the Pittsfield-based Center for Ecological Technology.

Greener Watts is one of the vendors offered through Massachusetts Electric's Green Up program, in which customers can elect to have all or part of their electricity generated from renewable energy sources while still keeping Massachusetts Electric as their electricity supplier.

Mr. Cowell said the project has strong support because of ongoing discussions with the community.

"If you have a commitment to dialogue and to win-win solutions, you have a better chance of success," he said.

CSG has also collaborated with corporations to improve energy efficiency with renewable energy sources. One such partnership, with BJ's Wholesale Club, turned its big-box store rooftops into solar electric power plants through use of photovoltaic units. Stores in Massachusetts, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and New York have PV installations that have the capacity to generate an average of 50 kilowatts to 60 kilowatts.

The 65.5 kilowatt solar unit at the BJ's store in Deptford, N.J., generates about 73,750 kilowatt-hours of electricity per year, which is equivalent to the average amount of electricity consumed by 72 U.S. residents per month.

The PV installations decrease the amount of nitrogen oxide, sulfur dioxide and carbon dioxide released into the air, compounds that contribute to smog, acid rain and the threat of global warming.

Mr. Cowell credits state Rep. John J. Binienda, D-Worcester, who is House chairman of the Energy Committee, for advocating on behalf of energy interests in the community.

"We have looked to his leadership. Worcester has benefited from his pushing the envelope on energy concerns," Mr. Cowell said.

CSG and CSGS employ 250 nationally, including 100 at the companies' headquarters in Westboro. What makes the otherwise nondescript building special is that it embodies the principles of the organization through its use of solar energy, energy efficient lighting and environmentally friendly carpeting, paint and detergents.

Employees also apply energy efficiency to their personal lives. Diane Meador, director of corporate communications, said CSG is comprised of committed individuals who care deeply about energy conservation. Many employees own hybrid cars, conduct home energy audits and have built Energy Star-rated homes, she said.

For more information on home energy audits, call (800) 632-8300, or visit Massachusetts Electric's Web site to learn more about energy efficiency and renewable energy programs at www.nationalgridus.com/masselectric.

ART: PHOTO; CHART

CUTLINE: (PHOTO)Conservation Services Group Inc. Chairman and CEO Stephen L. Cowell poses last month with posters detailing energy conservation measures. (CHART) Conservation Services Group Inc.

PHOTOG: (PHOTO) T&G Staff/PAULA FERAZZI SWIFT (CHART) T&G Staff

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# Wind project appeal meeting set for Jan. 25

December 30, 2004 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Author: Ben Rubin North Adams Transcript | Section: Today's Headlines | 773 Words OpenURL Link

FLORIDA -- A date has been set for another attempt at settling an appeal by several residents about permits for the Hoosac Wind Power project.

Attorneys from both sides will meet on Jan. 25 for a prescreening conference before a state Department of Environmental Protection hearing officer.

The wind project proposes 20 wind turbines in Florida and Monroe and was submitted by enXco, a private wind energy company from California. Sam Bittman, a Hoosac Wind spokesman, said the project would add 30 megawatts of energy to the area grid, capable of powering 9,000 homes.

The project would cost \$40 million and could net in \$150,000 to \$200,000 in tax revenues for the towns. It was appealed twice by a group of 10 Florida residents headed by Monica Wissman, citing aspects of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act.

Prescreening conferences are regularly scheduled by the department after appeals as a way to reach a settlement without court proceedings. "If agreements can be reached, it's definitely better than a long litigation process," said Eva Tor of the department.

If no settlement is reached, the appeal will go to an independent adjudicatory state agency, called the Division of Administrative Law of Appeals, or DALA.

With neither side budging from their positions, the Hoosac Wind appeal does not seem like fertile ground for a settlement any time soon. The most recent appeal occurred on Nov. 23, against the department's approval of the project. Previously the local conservation commission's approval was appealed against as well.

Bittman said his organization hopes there will be a fair review and a settlement so the company can move forward with the project.

Eleanor Tillinghast of the nonprofit environmental group Green Berkshires said her organization will be providing attorneys to Wissman's group. Green Berkshires, based in Great Barrington, is also actively opposing all other wind projects in the area, including projects in Lenox and Hancock.

Tillinghast said, "The only settlement that we would consider is if [Hoosac Wind] does a full environmental review" of the proposed construction area.

She said she is concerned that the town is rushing into the wind project without considering the entire impact, saying issues like lighting, noise, environmental damage, energy returns and visual impact should all be considered before any construction is done.

Bittman contended that long and rigorous logistical and environmental reviews already took place, including a fivemonth long environmental review with the department after the first appeal.

"We've done everything that the process has required of us to, so the assertion that we have rushed anything through is inaccurate," he said.

He said the project has secured all necessary permits for the Monroe portion without any appeals. The project also

went through all necessary legal steps for the Florida portion and has met a large amount of approval from the townspeople. The group of town citizens -- many living closest to the proposed wind turbines -- has virulently opposed the project.

Bittman said the closest house to the project, which is Wissman's, would be 1,800 feet away -- the length of five football fields.

Bittman said he feels the group's primary motive is to delay the project, because they are against having the project in their area.

"I don't know what the appellants are after. I don't think they want to settle," he said.

He said such a delay has not been effective in slowing the project, since plans to start building are in the spring of 2005. He said Hoosac Wind hopes there will be a five-month construction period, and this time next year the turbines will be up and running. He said there are no current plans to begin construction first in Monroe, in the case of more delays.

Still, Tillinghast said it is important to ask all necessary questions to make sure the project is a good idea. After the project is reviewed to the group's approval, then it could be decided what to do.

Asked if she was against the project regardless of more review or not, Tillinghast said not necessarily -- more review needed to be done before she could have an answer to that guestion.

She said other initiatives like energy conservation could take place to reduce coal and oil consumption and help the environment without more development.

She said there should also be concern that the Berkshires do not become flooded with wind power projects, and are exploited and damaged for the good of other areas in the state. Currently, three projects are being considered in the area, and one project is being considered for Nantucket Sound.

Bittman said the project would not only reduce coal and oil consumption, but start the journey away from it. He said the environmental impact of the construction would be minimal.

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### **Corrections**

December 15, 2004  $\mid$  Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA)

Section: Community | 83 Words

OpenURL Link

Mary Rentz, chairman of Sheeptacular of Pittsfield and vice chairman of the Hancock Shaker Village board, was selected by Downtown Inc. as this year's recipient of the Edward H. O'Keefe Downtown Person of the Year citation. A headline yesterday erroneously stated that Shaker Village awarded the honor to her.

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Berkshire Wind Power LLC in Hancock has signed an agreement to sell all the electricity it produces, not the Hoosac Wind project in Florida and Monroe as reported in an article yesterday.

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# Gov. Romney describes wind farms as 'not pretty'

December 15, 2004 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Author: Julie Mehegan Transcript State House Bureau | Section: Local Headlines | 475 Words OpenURL Link

BOSTON -- A spokeswoman for the Romney administration yesterday said there is no contradiction between the governor's avowed opposition to a wind farm in the waters off Cape Cod and his administration's support of a much smaller wind energy project in Western Massachusetts.

At a hearing on Cape Cod last Tuesday, Romney described wind farms as "not pretty," and made an impassioned argument against the construction of 130 turbines in Nantucket Sound to generate electricity.

The \$770 million project has some environmentalists and high-powered residents of the Cape up in arms.

But the Romney administration has signed off on a plan by Hoosac Wind to build 20 turbines in Florida in Berkshire County and Monroe in Franklin County, a project that was nearing construction before a last-minute appeal prompted a recent delay.

The difference, said Jennifer Flagg, a spokeswoman for the Executive Office of Enviro-nmental Affairs, is that landbased wind power projects are subject to local land and zoning requirements and there is a process in place for pursuing such a development on land.

There are no comparable requirements governing development in ocean waters, which is unprecedented in Massachusetts, she noted.

"Unlike land, there is no zoning or other regulations to help guide industrial developments in the ocean," Flagg said.

"It's not the Berkshires versus the Cape, or Nantucket Sound. It's land versus ocean."

At a meeting on the Cape Wind project last week, Romney himself said he is open to building wind farms in Massachusetts, but not in the "national treasure" of Nantucket Sound.

Two wind projects are being planned in western Massachusetts. The Hoosac Wind project calls for building 20 turbines, 11 of them on Florida's Bakke Mountain, with the rest placed on Crum Hill in Monroe. The turbines would be 213 feet from the ground to the blade hub, and 320 feet at the vertical extension of the rotor blades.

The project is backed by California-based wind energy company enXco and is expected to cost about \$40 million. Hoosac Wind has already entered an agreement to sell the electricity the project will generate.

Meanwhile, the Berkshire Wind Power LLC project would bring 10 turbines to Brodie Mountain in Hancock. That proposal is pending a review by the state Department of Environmental Protection.

Opponents of the projects in the Berkshires have made similar arguments as their counterparts on Cape Cod: Wind turbines threaten the ecology of the area where they will be located, they argue, and will damage the scenic beauty of the region.

But the projects in the Berkshires are minuscule compared to the \$770 million, 130-turbine Cape Wind project.

In addition, local residents have expressed support for Hoosac Wind project, which is expected to generate several hundred thousand dollars a year in lease payments and tax revenues.

In the May 2003 annual town election, a nonbinding resolution on wind power received 170 votes in favor and 47 against, with 48 percent of residents voting.

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Julie Mehegan Transcript State House Bureau, 'Gov. Romney describes wind farms as 'not pretty'', *North Adams Transcript* (online), 15 Dec 2004 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?</a>
p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/10702A4C5F8CD061>



DIANE BRONCACCIO Recorder Staff MONROE -- A group of Town of Florida residents has appealed the granting of a state wetlands permit that would clear the way for a 20-turbine wind farm on the Monroe-Florida town boundary.

December 15, 2004  $\mid$  Recorder, The [30 Day Embargo] (Greenfield, MA) 453 Words OpenURL Link

Residents filing the appeal as the "Ten Local Citizens Group" argued that more environmental analysis of the wind farm project is needed, because proposed access roads will cross 11 streams and does not comply with the state Wetlands Protection Act.

The appeal was filed on Nov. 23, according to Eva Tor, spokeswoman for the Department of Environmental Protection. On Nov. 8, the DEP issued an order of conditions for a Florida Conservation Commission wetlands permit, which had been appealed by a Florida citizens group in May.

One of those residents, Monica Wissman, said there are up to 50 people who are opposed to the siting of the 30-megawatt Hoosac Wind project, although only 10 signed the appeal, which was the minimum required by the appeal process.

Tor said the appeal has been sent to the Division of Administrative Law Appeals. "At this point, it's in the DEP prescreening process," she said, explaining that the case will be reviewed. She said a meeting will probably be set by the end of the year to determine if there are grounds for settlement.

If a settlement isn't possible, she said, the issue could go to Superior Court.

"We feel there are a lot of issues that were not dealt with," said Eleanor Tillinghast of Green Berkshires Inc., a spokeswoman for the Florida citizens group. She said the group believes the state is trying to "fast-track" the project, which she said will be the first full commercial-scale wind turbine farm in Massachusetts. She noted that the state secretary of environmental affairs decided not to ask for a full environmental impact review. "The consequence is, a lot of issues that should have been addressed are coming up in other agencies," she said. Tillinghast said these include issues that might conflict with the state Stormwater Management Act and the federal Clean Water Act.

Until the appeal is resolved, Tor said, construction may proceed on parts of the project that have no wetlands

Hoosac Wind project spokesman Sam Bittman said the developer, EnXco Inc., won't do anything on the site until the permit appeal has been resolved.

"At this point, we have great confidence in the quality of the engineering of this plan, and great confidence that the appeal will not be upheld," he said. "We would not have begun significant construction until spring, in any case."

If the wetlands issues are resolved, he said work might begin in late May or June.

The project will include nine 1.5-megawatt turbines on Crum Hill in Monroe and Florida, with another 11 on Bakke Mountain in Florida, with turbine blades extending to 320 feet above grade on a 48-acre plot north of Route 2.

You can reach Diane Broncaccio at:dbronc@recorder.com or by telephone at: (413) 772-0261 Ext. 277.

# • Citation (aglc Style)

'DIANE BRONCACCIO Recorder Staff MONROE -- A group of Town of Florida residents has appealed the granting of a state wetlands permit that would clear the way for a 20-turbine wind farm on the Monroe-Florida town boundary.', *Recorder, The* (online), 15 Dec 2004 (https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view? p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/10C7872A20885A98>



# Romney clarifies view on wind project sites

December 14, 2004 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Author: Julie Mehegan Eagle Boston Bureau| Section: Headlines | 521 Words OpenURL Link

CORRECTION DEC. 15, 2004

Berkshire Wind Power LLC in Hancock has signed an agreement to sell all the electricity it produces, not the Hoosac Wind project in Florida and Monroe as reported in an article yesterday.

BOSTON -- A spokeswoman for the Romney administration yesterday said there is no contradiction between the governor's avowed opposition to a wind farm in the waters off Cape Cod and his administration's support of a much smaller wind energy project in Western Massachusetts.

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Julie Mehegan can be reached at jmehegan@lowellsun.com or (617) 722-2495.

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# Romney to wind projects: Go west

December 13, 2004 | Cape Cod Times (Hyannis, MA) Author: KEVIN DENNEHY | 631 Words OpenURL Link

During a visit to the Cape last week, Gov. Mitt Romney said he would support wind projects in the Bay State - just not on Nantucket Sound.

Sure enough, his administration last week endorsed a plan by a company called Hoosac Wind to build 20 turbines in the towns of Florida and Monroe, in the northwestern corner of the state not far from the Vermont line.

"I've seen wind farms, and they are not pretty," the governor said during a hearing on the Cape Wind project Tuesday at Mattacheese Middle School in West Yarmouth.

"Nantucket Sound is a national treasure, and as such, should not be a factory for wind. Public interest must trump private profit."

Jennifer Flagg, a spokeswoman for the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, told the Springfield Republican that the administration supports the project in western Massachusetts, in part, because there is zoning for wind energy on the land. But not on the ocean.

Romney officials did not return calls.

The combined population of Florida and Monroe is fewer than 800 people. That's smaller than the number of people who attended the Cape Wind hearing in West Yarmouth.

State Rep. Shirley Gomes was upbeat last week about a new law that tightens oversight of senior citizens, something she's pushed since she was a volunteer at the Harwich Council on Aging.

The bill, which just needs the governor's signature after passing the Senate, makes outreach workers and councils mandatory reporters if they suspect a senior is being abused. Essentially, it establishes a process by which concerns would have to be investigated, and reports filed.

It's something badly needed, Gomes said, especially on Cape Cod, where the senior population is so large. "Many of them moved here from different places, and they've left their support systems behind," Gomes said. "Without that support system and family close by, they need someone looking out for them."

State Rep. Thomas George, R-Yarmouth, who is retiring from the House this month after representing the 1st Barnstable District for eight years, didn't have a chance to give a farewell speech with other departing legislators last week.

He was on a long-planned vacation to the Caribbean.

Had he given a speech, he planned to use this excerpt from the book "Franklin and Winston: An Intimate Portrait of an Epic Friendship." The book, by Jon Meacham, chronicles the relationship between Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Winston Churchill.

George thought the following passage from Meacham summed up his own feelings about his House colleagues:

"They left Newfoundland with the kind of mutual fondness that often springs up in foxholes or among travelers or colleagues who share common goals and face the same stresses. Many friendships are precisely that - formed on the fly, pitched and fulfilling for a time, some to be sustained in the face of passing years and changed circumstances, some not.

Some relationships can be transitory, but few people who are in the midst of one feel less intensely or less genuinely fond of another even if the friendship fades in the future."

Criticizing government is easy. Pitching solutions is a lot tougher.

The Pioneer Institute, a non-profit public policy think-tank, is sponsoring a "Better Government" contest seeking ideas on ways to make government more effective and efficient.

The top winner will receive \$5,000. Up to three runners-up will receive \$1,000 each.

State Rep. Jeffrey Perry, R-Sandwich, is pushing his constituents to come up with ideas. "A lot of the best ideas I hear come from constituents," he said. "This is an opportunity for them to introduce these ideas before a respected organization and maybe win a few bucks."

For more information, call 617-723-2277 or visit www.pioneerinstitute.org .

The Political Notes column is compiled by staff political reporter Kevin Dennehy, who can be reached at 508-888-5454, by fax at 888-5443 or by e-mail at kdennehy@capecodonline.com. correspondent David Kibbe contributed to this report.

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### WMass wind farms debated

December 10, 2004 | Republican, The (Springfield, MA) Author: BETSY CALVERT; STAFF | Section: News | 641 Words Page: A01 OpenURL Link

ecalvert@repub.com

#### **MONROE**

Opponents of the wind project believe the state is willing to sacrifice Western Massachusetts.

The Romney administration gave its support to a windmill project in Franklin and Berkshire counties yesterday, just two days after the governor told a Cape Cod hearing that he opposes a similar project proposed in Nantucket Sound.

"I've seen wind farms, and they are not pretty," Gov. W. Mitt Romney said during a hearing in West Yarmouth Tuesday night. "If we want them in Massachusetts, we'll build them, but not here on Nantucket Sound."

While the governor opposed that project, a spokesman for the state Executive Office of Environmental Affairs said Monroe and Florida are good locations for modern windmills.

"The administration is in support of that project," environmental affairs spokeswoman Jennifer Flagg said yesterday of the Hoosac Wind Project.

A European-based company, enXco, is much further along in its project for 20 windmills in Florida and Monroe, than is the 130-turbine Cape Wind project in Nantucket Sound. The Cape project, however, has received far more publicity, mostly from its opponents - property owners who don't want a view of huge towers on the horizon.

"Nantucket Sound is a national treasure, and as such, should not be a factory for wind," Romney said Tuesday night.

Asked why Romney supports the Hoosac project, Flagg said that zoning regulations do not yet exist for the ocean as they do on land. Until laws exist, for example, limiting commercial development to certain areas, such offshore projects should not go forward, she said.

Romney's support for the Hoosac project is foreboding to local opponents, such as Eleanor Tillinghast of Mount Washington. Tillinghast is a force behind a series of legal appeals being thrown in front of enXco as the date nears for construction of the Hoosac project.

She and others like her believe that the state, under regulatory pressure to develop renewable energy, will sacrifice any number of sites in Western Massachusetts, because it is poor, less populated and less politically influential.

For example, in addition to enXco's Hoosac Wind, another company, Berkshire Wind Power LLC, is poised already to build 10 turbines in Hancock.

Tillinghast has cited studies from Germany showing that wind power does not generate enough power to justify landscape destruction and taxpayer subsidies to corporations. The government would do better to invest in energy conservation and improved efficiencies, she said.

Other environmentalists disagree, however, stating that given the way Americans live, the country must invest in

all strategies outside of fossil fuels.

EnXco spokesman Sam Bittman disagreed with the way that Tillinghast and the legal appeal describe the land in Monroe and Florida as pristine wilderness. In fact, Bittman said, the land has long been logged for its valuable timber, leaving a landscape less scenic than true wilderness.

He also disagreed with Tillinghast's description of a corporate money grab in the form of federal and ratepayer subsidies per kilowatt hour of energy. The government has long subsidized the fossil fuel industry, Bittman said, and therefore, subsidies to renewable energy are needed to level the field.

The latest legal appeal by opponents of Hoosac Wind should not delay the project's construction, Bittman said, because the company had not planned to build roadways until mid-summer. The company is hoping that the state Department of Environmental Protection will throw out the appeal before it is sent to the state Division of Administrative Law Appeals.

Eva Tor, department spokeswoman, said there will be a pre-screening hearing before an adjudicatory officer sometime by the end of the month.

The formal appeal said the project should be sent back for a more complete environmental review for its impact on endangered species, such as fish and migrating birds of prey, as well as wetlands.

The department, on the other hand, has praised enXco for its efforts to reduce the impact of building four miles of road.

Material from the Associated Press was used in this report.

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### • Citation (aglc Style)

BETSY CALVERT, STAFF, 'WMass wind farms debated', *Republican, The* (online), 10 Dec 2004 A01 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/108778BED98A0CEA">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/108778BED98A0CEA</a>



# Wind farm signs deal to sell its electricity

December 8, 2004 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Author: Christopher Marcisz Berkshire Eagle Staff| Section: Headlines | 579 Words OpenURL Link

HANCOCK -- Although a proposed 10-turbine wind power farm on Brodie Mountain is still awaiting one more permit to proceed, its developers have signed a 22-year contract to sell their electricity, giving the project a long-term customer as it prepares to secure financing for construction.

In a contract signed last week and announced yesterday, Berkshire Wind Power LLC agreed to sell its electricity once it goes online to the Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Co., a Ludlow-based nonprofit power buyer representing 14 public-owned electric utilities across the state.

"We do whatever we can to meet the needs of our member utilities, at the lowest cost possible," MMWEC spokesman David Touhey said yesterday. "Having a diverse fuel supply helps keep costs down."

Into the grid

All of the new power from the Hancock project will be sent to the region's power grid, which is managed by the Independent System Operator-New England. Touhey likened the power grid, a network of transmission wires, as similar to a garden hose attached to many different spigots and with many different spouts. The power goes in from several points and comes out at several points.

"You really can't distinguish between power from one project or another," he said. "It goes into the system, and it is withdrawn at another point."

As part of the deal, MMWEC will purchase all the power at a fixed price of 3.65 cents per kilowatt-hour. That price is significantly lower than the group's current and projected costs. Touhey said that while the price varies, electricity produced by natural gas has been selling for about five cents a kilowatt-hour.

By purchasing power from multiple sources, including fossil fuel, nuclear and hydroelectric facilities, MMWEC manages the risk that may come from volatility in fuel markets.

Berkshire Wind, a subsidiary of Colorado-based Distributed Generation Systems Inc., hopes to have the project online by the end of next year.

"I would say we're 99 percent of the way there," Berkshire Wind communications director William Sheperdson said.

The project is currently awaiting final approval from the state Department of Environmental Protection. Last month, the developers appealed to the state to consider some wetlands issues, principally involving access roads at the top of the mountain.

"That's the last permit the project requires," Sheperdson said. The company hopes to receive it sometime in January. Once completed, it will be able to pursue financing for the project.

MMWEC will resell the power at cost to its 14 utility participants, which serve Ashburnham, Boylston, Groton, Hull, Marblehead, Paxton, Peabody, Shrewsbury, Templeton, Wakefield, Belmont, Holden, Ipswich and Sterling.

The annual output of the project is about 42,700 megawatt-hours. The project includes 10 turbines, with a 1.5-megawatt capacity each. And while the total generating capacity is 15 megawatts, ISO-NE estimates that its initial capacity will be about 3.75 megawatts. That figure is based on the fact that wind turbines do not work at full

capacity all the time, and will be revised as the project develops a track record.

MMWEC did not purchase the project's renewable energy credits -- its so-called "green tags." Those are a separate product that can be sold to utilities to meet renewable energy portfolio standards set by the state.

The other wind power project that may come online next year in the county, the Hoosac Wind project proposed for Florida and Monroe, has not yet signed any sales contracts.

Hoosac Wind spokesman Sam Bittman said yesterday it was pursuing "several promising options" with a number of interested parties.

Christopher Marcisz can be reached at cmarcisz@berkshireeagle.com or at (413) 664-4995.

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