

RICHIE DAVIS Recorder Staff When it comes to thinking about ways to pump up the region's economy, most planning looks at Franklin County as part of a north-south Pioneer Valley configuration.

July 13, 2004 | Recorder, The [30 Day Embargo] (Greenfield, MA) 786 Words
OpenURL Link

But a new strategic plan for rebuilding the economy looks across the "Northern Tier" stretching across Route 2 from Williamstown to Gardner. It proposes ways to throttle up activity in the region's creative, eco-tourism, renewable energy, and manufacturing sectors. And the study targets health care and manufacturing as two areas that could provide job opportunities and avenues for career advancement for low-income and low-skilled workers.

The \$150,000 plan will be the subject of a three-hour forum Monday at Stoneleigh-Burnham School in Greenfield. Hosted by Rep. John W. Olver, D-Amherst, who initiated the \$150,000 study by Northampton-based Mount Auburn Associates, the 11:30 a.m. event will bring together a variety of planners, development specialists and government officials to discuss the 220-page report.

"The strategic plan will chart a course for improving the economy and quality of life in the Northern Tier," Olver said. "The group of consultants and local stakeholders has been working diligently on this plan. They are dedicated to finding concrete ways to cultivate the economy of a region that has been challenged by the loss of its manufacturing base."

The plan recommends tapping the strengths of a region that s suffered economically because of the decline of manufacturing, encouraging coordination and establishment of training programs and ways of sparking new initiatives.

Recommendations point out directions for further discussion:

\* Tapping into its "creative cluster" -- including nonprofit arts and cultural institutions, creative businesses and individual performers and artists presents an opportunity for promoting artisan and crafts-related business development, the study recommends. It also suggests broadening the West County Artists Project and establishing a reputation as a cultural education and training center.

The creative sector, the study notes, employs nearly 5 percent of Franklin County's workers, and is enhanced by programs in place at Greenfield Community College, Hallmark Institute of Technology and a variety of festivals, arts organizations and attempts to revitalize old mills as arts centers.

It suggests the Northfield Mount Hermon School's Northfield campus as offering "a potential opportunity for further building the region's creative assets," yet it warns against building potentially competing performance spaces.\* Pointing to the solar, hydropower, wood and other biomass fuels in the region, the study identifies renewable and alternative energy as something that can be tapped for economic growth.

Position the Northern Tier as a laboratory of alternative and renewable energy activity that, with the right coordination and resources, could evolve into a model of commercialization and economic development," it recommends, pointing to the Northeast Sustainable Energy Association, the Hoosac Wind project planned for Monroe and Florida, and the North Quabbin Wood Project among the examples of the existing network of programs and institutions that need to be connected and built upon.

Developing a photovoltaic training center in Greenfield, for electricians, builders and firefighters and positioning the region as a national center for biomass technology development are among the ideas floated.

\* Growing interest in eco-tourism and the region s wealth of scenic and recreational attractions point to strong potential to build on the public and private resources, the study says.

It points to "poor identity and image" as a weakness, but recommends a way to "brand" the region with an ongoing promotional campaign, as well as a need for more motel rooms and restaurants to attract more touring and recreation packages.\* Other recommendations such as a manufacturing training consortium of the community colleges and technical schools or better coordinated manufacturing networks are offered as a way of strengthening the industrial base of the region.

Olver s focus on the Northern Tier, which represents a significant segment of the First Congressional District, reflects a concentration of poverty along the Route 2 corridor. He secured funding for the Franklin Regional Council of Governments to contract last fall with Mount Auburn and form a steering committee of planners and development officials, along with political and business leaders to develop the plan.

COG Executive Director Linda Dunlavy, a member of the working group that helped draft the study, said, that after working on a variety of Pioneer Valley economic development initiatives, "there are other ways we could think about regionality that could help as well."

The fact that the Northern Tier study looks at Franklin County in relation to its eastern and western neighbors with little mention of Amherst or Northampton may strike some readers as odd, but Dunlavy noted, "It's no weirder than any other boundary line."

"It's a different way of looking at Franklin County," said Franklin County Community Development Corp. Executive Director John Waite.

He noted Olver's initial Northern Tier report a dozen years ago helped lay the foundation for the CDC's Western Massachusetts Food Processing Center and for Route 2 improvements in the eastern part of the county.

"A lot of times, people see these as studies that don't go anywhere," he said. "But they can have an impact."

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# Feds' proposal would slow wind projects

June 4, 2004 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Author: Carrie Saldo North Adams Transcript | Section: Local | 566 Words OpenURL Link

The federal government is suggesting a three-stage consultation process be adopted for the proposed wind energy projects in Berkshire County.

The recommendation from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service is the result of a March inquiry from the Massachusetts Fisheries and Wildlife Board regarding the potential adverse environmental impact of the windmill projects in the state.

A June 2 letter from Marvin Moriarty, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regional director, suggested the process be completed during the early planning of a given project.

The letter, obtained by the Transcript, stated the process could include scoping of issues; conducting studies identified during scoping; and the assessment of effects on wildlife and recommendations based on study results.

"We share the common belief that more information should be collected during preconstruction studies to enable concerned agencies and other parties to have more meaningful participation in the decision process associated with siting, construction, and operation of these projects," the letter reads.

Neither officials from the Massachusetts Fisheries and Wildlife Board or the Hoosac Wind Project had received the letter as of Thursday.

However when faxed a copy of the letter, Sam Bittman, enXco spokesman, said the information was well taken.

"We're working with all interested parties to make sure that there is no environmental damage as a result of the [turbines] going up," Bittman said.

A March 2 letter stated the Massachusetts Fisheries and Wildlife Board was concerned about the impact proposed wind energy projects in Berkshire County -- including the Hoosac Wind Project -- would have on migratory birds and bats.

"These projects are proposed to be placed on ridges that are a likely pathway for seasonal bird migration," the letter from board Chairman George Darey reads.

Darey, contacted Wednesday, left a voice message saying he would be out of town for a few weeks starting Thursday.

Wayne McCallum, Massachusetts Fisheries and Wildlife director, said he had not received Moriarty's letter as of Thursday morning. McCallum added that he had no comment until Darey had seen the letter.

Marci Caplis, legislative affairs specialist for the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, said Wednesday that they regretted the delay in responding to the board's letter.

"The regional director [Moriarty] is really not pleased that it took so long," Caplis said.

She said the delay was due to some personnel changes at the wildlife service.

Locally, a sub-commission of the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission is working on a report weighing the pros

and cons of wind farms in the area, as well as make recommendations on them.

However, Nat Karns, executive director of the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission said it is too late to give input on the Hoosac Wind Project.

The \$40 million, 20 turbine project slated for the Bakke Mountain and Crum Hill ridgelines in Florida and Monroe has made several of the steps needed for the project to be realized.

EnXco was granted special permits from both Florida and Monroe earlier this year.

In December 2003, Long term leases for the project were also granted by Gov. Mitt Romney. In addition, the state's Executive Office of Environmental Affairs said that the project does not need an environmental impact report, which could have delayed the project for over a year.

Local building permits, a storm-water permit, a state Highway Department access permit are still needed for the project.

Wind projects are also proposed in Hancock and east of West Shaft Road in North Adams.

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# Controversy soars above wind farms

February 22, 2004 | Republican, The (Springfield, MA) Author: STAN FREEMAN; STAFF | Section: News | 1185 Words Page: A01 OpenURL Link

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Bird kills are not a universal problem.

In the windswept environs of California's Altamont Pass, they have been derided as "Cuisinarts of the sky."

The 5,400 wind turbines situated along the pass have a bad habit of slicing and dicing the winged and feathered, especially birds of prey, killing an estimated 500 or more of them a year, including red-tailed hawks, burrowing owls and golden eagles.

For environmentalists, it has been heart-wrenching. Cheerleaders for clean, renewable energy, they have had to suffer the accumulated deaths of the animals most associated with the environmental movement, the Audubon Society's raison d'etre.

With the largest wind farm in the eastern United States - albeit just 20 turbines - set to be installed on the ridges in Monroe and Florida by the end of this year, some are wondering if the electricity it produces will come with a similar price.

"Typically ridge lines can be problematic because they are often on bird migration routes," said Taber D. Allison, vice president of conservation science for the Massachusetts Audubon Society.

"One of the lessons of Altamont is that the location of the wind farm is important in determining its risk to birds. A lot of wind farms have very low avian mortality. But occasionally you get one with substantial kills," he said.

Allison said he does not know whether the Hoosac Wind project, as it's called, will be kind or cruel to passing birds, but the society does not think it has been adequately studied even though the state ruled in December an environmental impact review of the project would not be needed.

"We're not opposed to wind power or to any particular project. What we are asking is that there be an appropriate level of pre-construction monitoring," he said.

Allison acknowledged that a similar project in Searsburg, Vt., just 15 miles north of where the Hoosac Wind project will be built and along the same north-to-south migration route, has a good record in terms of its treatment of birds. The Searsburg Wind Power Project has been operating since 1997 and its 11 turbines were constructed by the same company, enXco Inc. of California, that will build those of Hoosac Wind.

During a yearlong study of the Searsburg project in 1997 by the former director of the Cape May Bird Observatory, Paul Kerlinger, not one dead bird was found beneath the Searsburg turbines.

Kerlinger believes Hoosac Wind will have a similar experience. "The fatalities of birds there are not likely to biologically significant. There should be small numbers."

However, lots of things kill birds. Wind turbines aren't the only culprits, and in fact, they are far down the list of the guilty. Perhaps 100 million to a billion birds die in collisions with building windows each year in the United States, an estimated 72 million are killed by agricultural pesticides, 60 million are killed in collisions with cars, four to as many

as 50 million are killed in collisions with communication towers and hundreds of millions are killed by cats, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. One Wisconsin study found that 39 million birds are killed in that state alone by domestic rural cats.

The toll for wind turbines? An estimated 33,000 dead birds of all types annually from the nation's 15,000 or so wind turbines, an average of about two per turbine, according to the Fish and Wildlife Service.

"My experience is that in most locations it's not a major issue," said James F. Manwell, co-director of the Center for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

"In the Northeast, with so many trees already here, birds are used to dealing with tree-like structures. At Altamont, there are no trees and birds have no place to sit except on the turbines," he said.

In addition, the hilly grazing lands of the Altamont Pass teem with ground squirrels and other rodents, attracting birds of prey, such as hawks and owls, to the area.

However, Manwell said the issue of bird deaths is often brought up "by opponents of wind power who have other reasons they don't want the turbines to be there."

"But the issue is still contentious. There is no simple answer even from the bird experts," he said.

If wind power has its negatives (and some say the impact on scenery is also one of them), it clearly has its positives. State-of-the-art turbines, such as those of Hoosac Wind, are dramatically more productive than their counterparts 20 years ago, producing 15 to 20 times as much power per turbine. They are also taller, and with their sleek solid towers, more like modern art sculptures than their ancestors, which often looked like outsized airplane propellers affixed to high-voltage towers.

Most important among the benefits, though, are that the fuel source is free and the electricity comes pollution-free, offsetting tons of emissions each year from power plants fueled by oil, gas or coal.

Hoosac Wind will feature 20 turbines, nine on Crum Hill in Monroe and Florida and another 11 on Bakke Mountain in Florida. From the ground to the tip of the blade when it is fully vertical, each turbine will extend about 340 feet. The 20 turbines will produce a total of 30 megawatts of power, about enough, when variable winds are considered, to electrify some 9,500 homes. Able to swivel into the wind for maximum efficiency, they will produce electricity in winds as low as 9 miles per hour.

However, inland Massachusetts only offers limited opportunities for wind power, said Manwell. "If you want a lot of energy, you're not going to get it on land, at least in Massachusetts. However, there is a lot of wind on the ocean, but the issue is that the ocean is deep, and there has to be some technology developed (to anchor the turbines) before that is accessible. That is a new frontier."

A large-scale but controversial wind turbine project proposed for Nantucket Sound has been fiercely opposed by many residents there for the effect it would have on ocean views. It is still under review by the state. The Cape Wind project would be made up of 130 wind turbines, producing 170 megawatts of power.

By contrast, Hoosac Wind has gotten a generally good reception from residents of Florida and Monroe. Voters in both communities approved allowing selectmen to negotiate land deals with enXco last year. And at a town election last year, Florida residents voted 170-47 in favor of a nonbinding referendum supporting wind power.

Wind power is not the experiment in progress it once was, said Manwell.

"By almost any measure, the quality has improved and the cost has gone down with these turbines," said Manwell.

"At some good wind sites, the cost (of the electricity they produce) is about 5 cents per kilowatt hour. Oil and gas are in the 3 to 4 cent range."

"So wind is moving from something you don't see that often to something that is getting to the point where it can be a significant contributor. We're just beginning to come to terms with what that means," he said.

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# A mighty wind saves towns big

February 15, 2004 | Boston Herald (MA)

Author: Jon Chesto | Section: Business | 795 Words

Page: 31 OpenURL Link

As office manager of Hull's municipal light department, Fern Coyle says she has often been approached by residents who complain about their power bills.

But after the town erected a 240-foot-tall wind turbine at the far end of the Hull peninsula just over two years ago, Coyle started hearing compliments as well.

While it faced a few critics, the towering white windmill is a cherished landmark to others among the town's 11,000 residents.

Coyle, who lives a few blocks away from the turbine on Pemberton Point, said she's surprised at the extent of the tower's fame.

"I think it's a source of pride for the town," Coyle said. "People come from all over to see it."

The success of Hull's \$700,000 turbine has helped spur communities up and down the Massachusetts coast - from Ipswich to Fairhaven - to consider putting up their own wind-driven power generators.

Meanwhile, several private developers have plans for small wind energy plants on ridges across New England - including one 30 megawatt project, "Hoosac Wind," that recently won state approval for two sites in the Berkshires.

Wind turbines can only be found in two Bay State towns - Hull and Princeton, and they generate only about one megawatt of energy combined.

But a megawatt is enough to power about 1,000 average homes, and state officials expect a surge of wind projects in the coming years.

That's expected to be driven partly by towns trying to save money and partly by developers rushing to capitalize on a law requiring 4 percent of the state's power to come from renewable sources by 2009.

Small projects such as Hull's do little on their own to help the state reach that goal. But clean-energy advocates say that the collective energy generated by all the region's pending small wind projects will eventually play a key role in reducing the state's reliance on natural gas and other fossil fuels.

The projects represent an important contrast in scale to Cape Wind's controversial plan to build 130 wind turbines in Nantucket Sound. Although many environmentalists support that 420-megawatt project, critics have raised concerns about the project's size and scope.

"We need smaller-scale projects that are locally accepted," said Larry Chretien, executive director of the Massachusetts Energy Consumers Alliance. "We can't always get them in a big bite like that one."

Temporary towers to test wind speeds have already been erected in Eastham, Fairhaven, Orleans and Harwich, said Greg Watson, a vice president at the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative.

Watson, whose group is helping the towns with grants and technical assistance, said more test towers could go up in Falmouth, Kingston, Bourne and Chatham after the ground thaws this spring. Other test sites are in Paxton,

Ipswich and Marblehead.

Loretta Cuffe O'Donnell, a city councilor in Lynn, said Hull's success helped encourage her city to consider wind turbines.

Hull's wind turbine powers the community's street lights and has been a major money-saver for the town, cutting the town's annual expenses by \$55,000 a year, the town's power department figures.

Meanwhile, the town says the Hull turbine saves residents another \$125,000 in electric costs, with some of that from the sale of renewable power credits.

"In the next five years, we'll probably see a lot of communities building Hull-style projects," said Rob Pratt, director of the Massachusetts Renewable Energy Trust.

The next project on tap is a two-turbine farm in Princeton near Wachusett Mountain in northern Worcester County. The pair will replace the town's eight aging turbines, which have only provided about 3 percent of Princeton's power because of their outdated technology.

Princeton's municipal light department expects to build the generators later this year with Community Energy Inc., of Wayne, Pa.

Other wind farms, such as the 20-turbine Hoosac Wind project and another 13-megawatt project in the Berkshires, could plug into New England's power grid sometime next year, Pratt said.

The wind turbine industry's growth still faces some obstacles. In some places, proposed wind energy projects have sparked an outcry over threatened scenic effects.

Some towns not served by municipal power companies may have a harder time tapping wind power, industry officials say.

And private developers, such as Community Energy, could be reluctant to spend money on wind projects if a tax credit for building them, which expired in December, isn't renewed in Congress.

Hull, however, plans to have its town meeting consider in May authorizing construction of a second turbine. Officials also are mulling a third tower, in the waters off Nantasket Beach.

"Everybody liked the first one so much they wanted another one," said John MacLeod, operations manager at Hull's light department. "We knew it was a good thing, but we didn't know it was this good."

Caption: MILL TOWN: Hull's 240-foot municipal windmill powers street lights and cuts local utility bills, saving \$180,000 a year. At least 11 other Bay State towns might soon copy the idea. Staff photo by Matt Stone

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# Don't sacrifice beauty of the mountains

February 13, 2004 | Caledonian-Record, The (VT) Section: Letters To Editor 272 Words OpenURL Link

#### To the Editor:

East Haven Wind Farm (EHWF) is clearly being built to sell electricity to southern New England (see "LED, Wind Farm Come To Terms," Caledonian-Record, Jan. 20, 2004). LED will simply market the electricity from EHWF to the New England Power Pool for which they will receive a fee of 5 percent of the electricity sales plus 10 percent of the renewable energy credits earned by EHWF.

Currently this is estimated to be 1.4 percent of LED's annual revenue. However Mr. Piper of LED points out that this is a percentage of an unknown number. LED will also incur accounting expenses for handling the transactions. The annual profit to LED, and therefore the benefit to LED ratepayers, are very questionable and uncertain.

Similar wind turbine power plants are being proposed for construction on other ridgelines in the NEK and on Vermont's southern border at Monroe, and Florida, Mass. (Hoosac Wind Project). The sole purpose of these projects is to provide electricity to the ratepayers of southern New England.

Yes, they are paying for the towers in their rates. However, the renewable energy credits earned by the wind turbine power plants located in the NEK can be purchased by the utility companies in southern New England to meet renewable energy standards imposed by law in their states. These utility companies thus avoid constructing renewable energy projects in their territory where they are likely to meet very strong public opposition.

The citizens of the NEK should not sacrifice the awesome beauty of our mountains and hills for the benefit of the utility companies and ratepayers in southern New England.

### George Bastien

#### Danville

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# Putting the wind to work

February 6, 2004 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Author: Bill Carey Berkshire Eagle Staff| Section: Today's Headlines | 1117 Words OpenURL Link

NORTH ADAMS -- There is more to creating a wind farm than the wind and a prayer, but the wind certainly is key.

"The economic viability of a potential wind project is most closely related to the wind speed at the site," explained Todd Presson, project manager of the planned, \$40 million Hoosac Wind Project in the towns of Florida and Monroe.

While other factors were considered, it was the favorable wind environment of the Bakke Mountain and Crum Hill ridgelines in Florida and Monroe, respectively, that led enXco Inc., the Palm Springs, Calif., wind-energy firm to settle on the Berkshires for the first of three wind farms the company is planning in New England.

With 20 turbines generating 30 mega-watts of electricity, Hoosac Wind will be the region's largest operational wind farm when it comes on line, possibly by the end of the year.

enXco is owned by SIIF Energies of France, a renewable energy company that is half-owned by the French electricity board EDF.

Among other factors that went into the local site selection, "we pursued private and town-owned lands because it was not clear whether state policy would accommodate wind power development on state-owned land," said Presson, who responded in writing and by telephone to a series of questions.

"We considered the site's proximity to existing transmission lines for interconnection to the utility grid," he said, and consulted with agencies that could identify whether rare species or priority habitat would be affected. "The combination of all of those factors led us to the site in Florida and Monroe."

Some two years after choosing the location, enXco has advanced to the sixth step of what it describes as a sevenstep process to creating a wind farm. The firm has calculated the available wind with five temporary measurement towers, conducted environmental studies, developed a preliminary design and won approval to use about 48 acres of public and privately owned land for the turbines, access roads and underground transmission lines.

In December, Gov. Mitt Romney signed legislation allowing Florida and Monroe to enter into long-term leases with enXco, expected to be 35 years in duration. That same month, the state's Executive Office of Environmental Affairs determined that the Hoosac Wind Project does not require an environmental impact report, which could have delayed the project by a year or more.

The last two steps are to secure the remaining, necessary permits and to build the wind farm.

As to the former, enXco has won approval of special permits needed from the Florida Select Board and Monroe Zoning Board of Appeals, but awaits the filing of those permits, Presson said. The project also still requires local building permits, a storm-water permit and an access permit from the state Highway Department.

Transportation of the turbines, which will be provided by GE Wind Energy of Tehachapi, Calif., is still to be determined. According to enXco, approximately eight tractor-trailers are needed to deliver each turbine, consisting of a 213-foot-high tower, the nacelle, or hub, and three rotor blades.

"We are still reviewing options, including rail and trucking, but have not yet selected the final route," Presson said.

"A representative from GE Wind was on the site last week gathering data to help inform this decision, as they will likely be responsible for equipment delivery."

Its promise of clean, renewable energy notwithstanding, the Hoosac Wind Project is seen by some critics as blighting the landscape and causing untold damage to wildlife and the quality of life in the vicinity of the churning rotors. The project will have a high profile, with the 11 towers along Bakke Mountain clearly visible from downtown North Adams.

"Potential impacts to wildlife remain an important concern, as does the highly visible nature of wind turbines," the state's environmental secretary, Ellen Roy Herzfelder, wrote in her Dec. 26 determination excusing the project from an environmental impact report. She said it will be the "ongoing responsibility" of enXco to manage the project in a way that minimizes impacts, and to support its "fair share" of post-construction monitoring.

At the onset, enXco is trying to curb one visual impact -- the need to illuminate the turbine towers at night to warn off low-flying aircraft. Presson said the company has submitted applications to the Federal Aviation Administration and Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission with a proposed lighting configuration.

"Rather than lighting every turbine, we have proposed lighting seven of the 20 turbines," he said of the plan. "We expect to receive feedback on our application from FAA in the next several weeks, and a public comment period will follow."

Presson was asked to describe the noise produced by a working wind farm.

"The noise generated by multiple turbines is only slightly louder (about 3 decibels) than the noise generated by a single turbine," he said. "Standing 500 feet from the base of a 1.5-megawatt turbine (like those being used for the Hoosac Wind Project), the noise is about as loud as a typical clothes dryer. At 1,000 feet, noise levels are approximately 45 decibels -- roughly equivalent to the background noise level in a typical home, or a refrigerator at a distance of three feet."

The nearest residence to a turbine is about 1,800 feet away, and the maximum noise level there will be about 42 decibels under certain wind conditions, he said.

What is the payback to the host towns? Presson said the projected, total annual tax revenue from the project will be \$300,000, to be divided by the number of turbines in each town, most of which lie in Florida. The towns also will share roughly \$40,000 to \$60,000 in annual royalty payments based on the amount of energy generated by turbines on town-owned property. Half of the turbines are on private property.

For its part, enXco already has won a \$17 million commitment for the future purchase of energy from the Massachusetts Renewable Energy Trust.

Presson said the annual operating cost of the wind farm will be \$400,000 to \$500,000, including the salaries of two full-time operators. He initially offered a cost-per-kilowatt hour to describe the operating budget, but was reluctant to translate that directly into dollars because "it goes to the wind resource, just measuring the wind. Five measurement towers have been up for some time now."

Profitability, too, depends on the wind.

The operating surplus "is used to repay capital costs associated with constructing a modern wind plant, which are generally higher than 'traditional' power plants," Presson said. "The operating surplus in any given year is uncertain, of course, because the wind is variable, and returns to investors vary depending on financing structures."

The debt is expected to be repaid during the first 10 to 15 years, and a return on investment of 10 percent or better is typical over the life of the project, he said.

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# NIMBYs fuel wind power opposition

January 11, 2004 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA)

Section: Letters | 301 Words

OpenURL Link

#### To the Editor of THE EAGLE:

Since the beginning of the Hoosac Wind Project I have been to all of the informational meetings sponsored by the Center for Environmental Technologies (CET) and other organizations, have followed all of the editorial debate for and against wind power, read all information I could and tried in every way to understand the true story of wind power.

The greatest enthusiasm for wind power appears to be from people who are truly concerned about the apparent environmental damage occurring from our reliance on energy from fossil fuels. I have just finished reading "Beating the Heat" by John J. Berger. He states that at present 95 percent of our energy in the United States is from fossil fuels or nuclear power, that more than 22 tons of carbon dioxide and equivalent gases are released yearly for each citizen of the U.S. and yet we have the resources and technology to produce almost all of our energy needs from renewable energy sources. He also points out that of the renewable energy sources, wind power capacity is growing faster that any other energy technology in the world.

The advance in wind power technology in the last two decades was also stressed in the Jan. 3 Associated Press story on the new wind farm at Birds Landing, Calif. where 90 turbines have been installed. In a Dec. 19 news story we are told that Britain is planning to put more than a thousand turbines off its coastline to supply 10 percent of its total energy by 2010.

News stories like these do not sound like they apply to an industry that is afflicted with the ailments the opponents claim. I read two things from the opponents, "Not In My Back Yard" and "Not Where I Can See It."

STANLEY L. BROWN

Florida Jan. 7, 2004

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'NIMBYs fuel wind power opposition', *Berkshire Eagle, The* (online), 11 Jan 2004 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1000642E92690AFC">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1000642E92690AFC</a>



# Wind Power: A Step Beyond Oil

January 8, 2004 | Hartford Advocate (CT)

Section: News 825 Words

OpenURL Link

As 2003 corners into 2004, the Berkshire foothills rim the towns of West Franklin and East Berkshire counties with nearly pristine forested crags much as they did a hundred years ago and more.

But this time next year, the mountains around the villages of Florida and Monroe will have a different look. Cemented onto the upper ledges of Crum Hill and Bakke Mountain will be 20 white wind turbines 213 feet high, placed there by enXco, a California-based, French-owned company that wants to build a 28.5-megawatt wind farm in these quiet uplands.

EnXco plans to put the windmills up this summer and have them on line by the end of 2004. On Dec. 26 the project passed a major hurdle as the state Executive Office of Environmental Affairs approved its environmental notification form without requiring the full environmental impact report developers of large projects may be required to file under the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA).

In her decision not to require the MEPA report, EOEA Secretary Ellen Roy Herzfelder wrote that the wind farm, called the Hoosac Wind project, "will lead to significant air quality benefits." The New England Power Pool has estimated that if the wind farm's 28.5 megawatts were generated by fossil-fuel-fired power plants, those plants would emit 213 tons a year of sulfur dioxide, a cause of acid rain, and 60,000 tons of carbon dioxide, one of the so-called "greenhouse gases" believed to be contributing to global warming.

EnXco is still waiting for local building permits, local orders of conditions for altering wetlands, and local and state approvals to transport the turbines to the mountains over specified roads.

Perhaps because enXco's plans are moving forward against the backdrop of a war in which oil is a strategic factor, the wind farm has not generated much public controversy, though the towering windmills will be visible from many residents' homes in Florida and Monroe. The project is also less than one-sixth the size of the wind farm proposed for the shoals off Cape Cod, which is the subject of a highly publicized battle that has nearly torn eastern Massachusetts apart. Hikers have objected, but have not organized opposition to the project. The Executive Committee of the Regional Planning Commission in Berkshire County, where Florida is located, had recommended -- to no avail, as it turned out -- that the state require a full environmental impact report.

EnXco is already known in the area as the operator of the 19-turbine Searsburg wind farm in Vermont, just 15 miles away. The company, whose regional headquarters are in Burlington, will not have a permanent claim on the land it will use in Massachusetts; it will lease that land for 30 years, after which the windmills will be removed and their concrete bases covered over. EnXco operates more than 2,800 windmills in Palm Springs and other communities in California, as well as other wind farms in the U.S., the U.K., Costa Rica and India.

The expansion of wind farms in western New England is a decisive step into a new energy future with some very important unknowns. How the development of wind power will play out here, what impact it will have on the landscape after the life of the windmills, and how much it will contribute to the New England electrical grid as opposed to the amount of energy it will take to run the turbines, remain to be seen no matter what the company's projections may say.

In addition to their aesthetic objections to windmills, which must often be positioned in very visible places, critics of wind energy have pointed out that it takes some energy from polluting sources like coal and oil to power wind farms. Todd Presson, project manager for enXco in Burlington, said the windmills "do require electricity from the grid, but it's only to energize the magnetic field. They have some small motors and heaters in the wintertime, but

other than that they use only very nominal amounts of electricity."

According to studies cited by the wind energy industry, wind turbines "pay back" the energy it takes to power them more quickly than any other energy technology. A wind turbine generates enough energy to equal all the energy from other sources needed for its construction, operation and retirement in only three to eight months, those studies say.

Whatever the truth about that may be, and however that truth may vary from place to place, all parties agree that wind power itself is a pollution-free, endlessly renewable energy source. It still supplies less than 1 percent of the nation's and the region's energy, but in the U.S. the wind industry has grown more than 50 percent since the year 2000.

In making its move for market share here, EnXco is taking advantage of a Massachusetts law, the Renewables Portfolio Standard, which stipulates that 4 percent of the electricity sold in the commonwealth by 2009 must come from renewable sources. The federal government wants to see 5 percent of the electricity used in the U.S. come from wind by 2020.

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'Wind Power: A Step Beyond Oil', *Hartford Advocate* (online), 8 Jan 2004 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/11674DCB559F7DF0">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/11674DCB559F7DF0</a>



# Monuments to folly

January 6, 2004 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA)

Section: Letters | 458 Words

OpenURL Link

#### To the Editor of THE EAGLE:

True believers in wind-electric plants as well as in the benevolence of our state government must feel relieved that the secretary of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs is so confident of wind plant benefits that she didn't feel it necessary to require Hoosac Wind's proponents to undergo an environmental impact report. Skeptics, though, might wonder if her family's extensive ties to the electric industry had more to do with the Cohasset resident's decision than her commitment to preserving the environmental integrity of Western Massachusetts.

Ellen Roy Herzfelder, who states that her decision will set the tone for further development of wind plants on the Massachusetts mainland, doesn't bring any expertise in environmental science to her appointed office (she majored in business and politics). Nevertheless, we can hope that the materials she reviewed reflected a broader range of analysis than that of the wind industry's facile "study" which pretends to show that local property values won't be harmed by industrializing some of our last remaining wild lands.

Developers like to talk about how many "homes" will be powered by the wind plants, even though the very nature of the electric grid proves their assertions to be false. Moreover, they fail to note that the majority of our electrical generation is destined not for homes, but for industrial and commercial uses. In the U.S., less than 12 percent of manmade emissions of "greenhouse" gases result from residential electrical use.

While fretting over our country's refusal to ratify the Kyoto Protocol, industry proponents don't often mention that China, for example (the world's most populous nation and a notorious environmental and human-rights offender), would be exempt from Kyoto's provisions as a "developing country." Putting wind plants in a broader context would be embarrassing for the pro-wind propagandists. Instead, they divert attention by shedding crocodile tears over the very environment they are preparing to despoil for their financial gain and that of their foreign masters.

When confronted with the reality that massive wind plant development won't have the slightest effect on global warming or our dependence on other forms of electric generation, wind plant advocates such as Secretary Roy Herzfelder argue that the installations are nevertheless desirable as "symbols" of supposedly progressive energy policy. But what they symbolize to the investors counting their francs on the still unspoiled Riviera may be a little bit different from the eco-utopia suggested by the wind industry's evangelical proponents. As locally widespread naivete is replaced by an awareness of the realities of wind generation, these monstrosities will come to be seen for what they really are: the latest example of the exploitation of the Appalachian Range and its people by outside money interests, and monuments to folly.

### DAVID ROBERSON

Rowe, Jan. 2, 2004

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'Monuments to folly', *Berkshire Eagle, The* (online), 6 Jan 2004 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?</a> p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/0FFEBF77C4A4897A>



# Eagle Week in Review

January 2, 2004 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Section: Sunday Magazine | 1696 Words OpenURL Link

Monday

Fire destroys home

HINSDALE -- Officials yesterday were investigating the cause of a fire that destroyed a log home at 278 Creamery Road on Saturday night.

There were no injuries in the blaze, which was reported shortly before 9 p.m. Saturday. However, a dog belonging to the house's occupants, the Martin Becker family, died in the fire.

Becker and his wife were visiting neighbors nearby when the blaze broke out, said Fire Chief Larry Turner. He said the couple's teenage son was awakened by smoke alarms and escaped the fire after determining that his sister was not in the house.

"He crawled out onto a porch roof and went to a neighbor's house and called [911]," said Turner.

Firefighters from Dalton stood by Hins-dale's station, and tanker truck crews from Peru and Middlefield assisted at the scene, said Turner.

Mayor sets open house

PITTSFIELD -- Mayor-elect James Ruberto has announced plans to join with the new city councilors in holding an open house at City Hall following inauguration ceremonies on Monday, Jan. 5. The open house is scheduled from noon to 5.

The inauguration itself will be at 10 in the City Council chambers.

Refreshments at the open house will be provided by Pittsfield restaurants and merchants offering a "Taste of Downtown."

Ruberto said the open house would ensure that the New Year begins in a spirit of cooperation and open communication.

Wahconah plan eyed

PITTSFIELD -- A Connecticut man with ties to both professional and amateur baseball said he believes Wahconah Park is better suited for a summer collegiate league franchise than for another professional team.

Bob Wirz of Orange -- who recently spoke with Mayor Sara Hathaway and Mayor-elect James M. Ruberto about the possibility of bringing a New England Collegiate Baseball League team to Pittsfield -- said last week that he believes the aging 4,000-seat Wahconah Park, which was built in 1919, is a tough place for a professional team to be financially viable.

"I think Wahconah's age works against it," said Wirz, past president of the Waterbury (Conn.) Spirit of the Northeast League, which is now based in Lynn.

Talk of bringing an NECBL team to Wahconah Park for the 2004 season appears to have died after Ruberto told Wirz that he was more interested in having a minor league team come to Pittsfield.

Tuesday

#### Wind farm advances

The state's environmental secretary has determined that the planned Hoosac Wind Project in the towns of Florida and Monroe does not require an environmental impact report, moving the project, which will be the largest operational wind farm in New England, to the permitting stage.

Environmental Secretary Ellen Roy Herzfelder, in a decision dated Dec. 26, said that enough information has been presented on the potential impacts of the 20-turbine wind farm to forgo a more comprehensive EIR.

The wind energy firm enXco Inc., which has corporate headquarters in Palm Springs, Calif., plans to erect 20 turbines capable of generating 30 megawatts of electricity -- enough to power 9,500 houses. Eleven turbines will be located on the Bakke Mountain ridge in Florida and nine along Crum Hill in Monroe and Florida.

The estimated \$40 million project also involves the construction of access roads, transmission lines, an electrical substation and maintenance, and equipment buildings.

#### Liquor sales mulled

PITTSFIELD -- The city's Licensing Board yesterday indicated it will take an extremely open approach to granting permission to existing package stores for Sunday sales of alcohol.

The three-member board held an informal discussion during a meeting yesterday to map out how it will approach Sunday liquor sales, which have been given a green light by the state in an economic stimulus package.

Since the Legislature passed the law earlier this year, there has been a swirl of confusion around how it will be implemented on Jan. 4, the first Sunday of the new year.

The state and members of the Legislature have since clarified the rules and made clear that any package store seeking to stay open on Sunday must have permission from the local license-granting authority, which in Pittsfield's case is the Licensing Board. The law gave broad local leeway as to how permission is granted and what fees are charged.

# Labor disputes settled

PITTSFIELD -- Avoiding the possibility of potentially expensive judgments against the city, Mayor Sara Hathaway yesterday announced that Pittsfield has agreed to settle labor disputes with four city unions over fees that were tacked onto their health insurance premiums in 2000.

In a written statement released late yesterday afternoon, Hathaway said that her administration had agreed to settlements worth a total of \$15,400 with the Interna-tional Brotherhood of Police Officers Local 447 and Local 447S; the Pittsfield Super-visory and Professional Employees' Asso-ciation, and the Pittsfield City Employees' Clerical Association.

The settlements will resolve grievances filed by the police officers and the police supervisors and will end a pending labor relations action brought by the professional employees and the clerical association.

The four complaints stemmed from the health insurance crisis that helped plunge Pittsfield into a massive deficit in 2001.

Wednesday

MoCA gets 2 tenants

NORTH ADAMS -- The new year will bring two new tenants to the Massachu-setts Museum of Contemporary Art complex. The area businesses -- an online subscription-based service and a local law firm -- say they have outgrown their old spaces.

This weekend, Agora Media will move into its new facilities on the second floor of the museum's Building 10. The company had previously been in the old General Cable mill on Water Street in Williamstown.

The company works with recognized advice and self-help experts to create subscription, online products and services. The Berkshire County office employs eight part-time and 12 full-time employees.

Also moving in is law firm Freedman, DeRosa & Rondeau, which will move from its offices at 85 Main St. into Building 1 over the Jan. 17 weekend.

John B. DeRosa, a partner in the firm, said the law practice had been hoping to move to the museum or years because of his personal involvement in its creation, going back to 1986.

The firm is the museum's legal counsel.

Quiet New Year looms

With increasingly harsh drunken-driving laws, a reduction in the number of venues and a dearth of local public celebrations, low-key dinner parties and family gatherings are replacing the traditional hoot 'n' holler, party hatwearing, boozy New Year's Eve celebrations of years past.

"We are seeing a whole subculture of people who are no longer interested in big parties," said Edward Domaney, the owner of Domaney's Liquors on State Road in Great Barrington.

"At Domaney's, we see a lot more people planning smaller parties, maybe those who invite just a few couples or families. People aren't into those crazy parties anymore. They're more interested, as far as I can see, in smaller, more intimate parties."

Megan B. Moore of Lenox, owner of Moore Fine Foods, one of the more well-known caterers in the county, noted that this year -- for the first time in many years -- her company is not catering any large, formal, sit-down dinners on New Year's Eve.

Instead, she has a number of smaller, more casual events lined up.

Antiques stores hit

Berkshire County police departments are working together and with police in New York state and Connecticut to track down the perpetrators of a recent string of antiques thefts.

Stores in Lenox, Great Barrington and Sheffield as well as Litchfield, Conn., and Hudson, N.Y., have suffered a rash of recent robberies that began in the fall. Dealers here and in the neighboring states said the thefts are carried out by a couple who pretend to be antiques dealers from Canada, and that the pair may be working with others.

In Berkshire County, dealers said there have been robberies at Bruce Sikora Antiquarian, Campo de Fiori and Tracy Goodnow Art & Antiques in Sheffield, Mullin-Jones Antiquities and the Berkshire Antique Center in Great Barrington, and Charles Flint Antiques in Lenox, among others.

Holiday buying flat

The Christmas holiday shopping season thus far has been respectable, but will not be remembered as extraordinary, according to people involved in the local retail industry.

Bob Kazakiewich, manager of the Wal-Mart store on Curran Highway in North Adams, rated the holiday season as "neutral" compared to years past.

"We had a good season," Kazakiewich said. "I've been through better, I've been through worse. It's kind of in the middle."

Statewide, the picture appeared somewhat rosier. Before Christmas, the Boston-based Retailers Association of Massachusetts forecasted that retail sales during the holiday season would increase by 5 percent over the same period last year.

But a survey of Berkshire County retail concerns suggested that the growth in holiday sales from last year has been relatively flat. The usual suspects -- weather and the economy -- figure prominently.

Thursday

Johansson's sale near?

LEE-- On Main Street, shopkeepers and passers-by are wondering what's up at Johansson's 5 & 10 building, where the shelves at the landmark, all-purpose dime store are becoming more spartan by the day.

Owner George Inman is still selling penny candy and bus tickets from the store at 40-50 Main St., but is saying little about his plans. Pressed about reports that he is about to sell the building or the business, or both, he replied, "I don't know, but we've got a helluva sale going on."

Word on the street is that he's soon closing the shop and has a deal in the works to sell the handsome 1879 building, a 12,000-square-foot, three-story structure where the coveted upper floors have been empty since the 1950s.

Hodgkins sues Krofta

Former State Rep. Christopher Hodgkins is suing the estate of Milos Krofta for money he said Krofta promised him before the water technology pioneer's death.

"This is a lawsuit where Dr. Krofta owed me a sum of money that I never had any doubt that he was going to pay, and then he had an untimely death," said Hodgkins. "The only way I can collect what I am owed is to file the claim in probate court. This is not an adversarial situation."

According to Krofta's grandson, Carl Sprague of Stockbridge, the claim will likely be settled out of court. Sprague said he is overseeing his grandfather's estate and working closely with lawyers on the issue. Hodgkins agreed that no one has disputed the claim at this time.

Friday Because of early holiday deadlines, there are no Friday items in this week's listing.

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RICHIE DAVIS Recorder Staff MONROE -- The state has given a big go-ahead to a 20-turbine wind farm for Monroe and Florida, helping clear the way for what would be the largest wind project in New England.

January 1, 2004 | Recorder, The [30 Day Embargo] (Greenfield, MA) 553 Words
OpenURL Link

EnXco Inc., which is planning the 30-megawatt Hoosac Wind project, will not be required to prepare an environmental impact report, state Environmental Affairs Secretary Ellen Roy Herzfelder determined following a review of the project.

Although the wind farm still requires additional state and local permits, the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act decision clears a major hurdle. "The project sets an important precedent for development of renewable energy in the commonwealth," Herzfelder wrote, "and will lead to significant air quality benefits."

Commending Monroe and Florida officials for their support the \$40 million project, she hailed it as "an important milestone for renewable energy production in Massachusetts."

Sam Bittman, project spokesman, said, "I'm delighted. It's a wonderful way to end the year."

The state's decision rejecting the need for a full environmental review goes against the recommendation of Berkshire Regional Planning Commission Executive Committee, which in turn rejected a commission review panel's finding that enXco's preliminary documentation was sufficient.

"We feel vindicated," Bittman said. "Our goal was to create a model of environmental responsibility. "The MEPA certification attests to that."

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. About 38 acres of vegetation would be allowed to grow back, keeping a 16-foot-wide access road. About 3,900 square feet of wetlands and 375 linear feet of stream banks are estimated to be altered, he noted, by enXco plans to replicate 5,160 square feet of wetlands and 309 linear feet of bank.

Herzfelder rejected comments saying the 48-acre project is too close to the 50-acre mandatory requirement for an environmental review.

According to New England Power Pool emissions data, the wind project is estimated to offset the emission of approximately 213 tons of acid-rain-causing sulfur dioxide per year, as well as 74 tons of smog-producing nitrogen oxides and 60,000 tons of carbon dioxide, a major greenhouse gas.

"Symbolically and substantively, the project represents an important commitment to the future of renewable energy in Massachusetts, and an affirmation of the commonwealth's resolve to reduce dependence on fossil fuels," Herzfelder wrote.

Referring to a large offshore project in Nantucket Sound, the environmental secretary said her decision should not signal the state's decision on that controversial wind farm.

"While setting an important precedent, my decision does not mean that (the state) has changed its policies for review of offshore wind farms," Herzfelder wrote.

Special zoning permits, on which hearings were held in early November, are expected to be issued in January by the

Monroe Zoning Board of Appeals and Florida selectmen, Bittman said. The Monroe Conservation Commission has scheduled a Jan. 5 public hearing to consider wetlands permit applications, and a similar hearing is scheduled Jan. 15 in Florida.

The company also plans to apply to the Massachusetts Highway Department and the Department of Environmental Protection for permits to transport components of the wind turbines and towers to the site, Bittman said. It also plans to apply to the towns for building permits so that construction can begin in late May or early June.

"It's an ambitious construction schedule," Bittman said. But with the MEPA review settled, "I think we can be making electricity by this time next year."

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'RICHIE DAVIS Recorder Staff MONROE -- The state has given a big go-ahead to a 20-turbine wind farm for Monroe and Florida, helping clear the way for what would be the largest wind project in New England.', *Recorder, The* (online), 1 Jan 2004 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/10C5DFAC6AA0E720">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/10C5DFAC6AA0E720</a>



# Questions concerning Sgt. Allison

December 31, 2003 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Section: Editorials | 290 Words

OpenURL Link

The family of Army Sergeant Glenn Richard Allison is not the only party keenly interested in the Army's investigation of his death. Here is what we know: The 24-year-old Pittsfield man, strong and healthy enough to pass an Army physical, was "getting over the flu" when he received his deployment order for Iraq, according to his sister. Before he left, he received a number of vaccinations, including an anthrax vaccine. Six days later, he died while participating in a routine running exercise, an exertion that should not normally kill a fit young soldier. The day news of his death appeared in The Eagle, another front page story reported that a federal judge ordered the military to stop giving an "experimental" anthrax vaccine to servicemen and women. Could there be a connection? Seeing as some 900,000 others got this vaccine, it's a possibility the Army should consider.

<span class='articleHeadline'> Wind behind the project

</span> The decision to exempt the Hoosac Wind Project in the towns of Florida and Monroe from an environmental impact report is good news for enXco, the California developer of the proposed windmill farm, which hopes to have the towers up in time for next year's windy season. Environmental Secretary Ellen Roy Herzfelder asserts that the company has presented enough information on its project to move forward in the permitting process, which will include an exhaustive review of its impact on the local environment and scenic values. Wind power is clean, endlessly renewable energy, and it lessens our dependence on foreign oil and polluting power plants. The scenic impact on the beautiful Berkshires is undeniable, but the impact is less than that of acid rain and air pollution. Nevertheless, we trust that Beacon Hill will hold this project to high environmental standards.

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# EIR not needed for Hoosac Wind Project

December 30, 2003 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Author: Carrie SaldoNorth Adams Transcript | Section: Local Headlines | 417 Words OpenURL Link

An Environmental Impact Review is not needed for the Hoosac Wind Project, according to a decision released Monday by the Secretary of Environmental Affairs.

The ruling is a positive one, according to State Rep. Daniel Bosley who said the need for an EIR could have set the 19-windmill project, proposed for two ridgelines in Florida and Monroe, back at least a year.

EnXco, East Coast Inc., is awaiting decisions from special permit granting authorities in Florida and Monroe. If the two towns rule to grant the permits enXco will have the green light to start building portions of the project.

Monday Florida Town Administrator Jana Hunkler-Brule said eventhough the state has ruled an EIR is not needed the town Conservation Commission may hire an independent consultant to review the project.

She also said the Board of Selectman -- which decides whether to issue special permits in town -- would be discussing potential dates to render a decision regarding the permits at its meeting Monday night.

Monroe officials could not be reached for comment to determine whether a date has been set to review special permit information its Zoning Board of Appeals was given during a November meeting.

However, the Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission and Massachusetts Historic Commission will also need to review and approve portions of the proposed project.

Pros and cons of the proposed project were included in the 17-page decision, Bosley said. He also said the report concluded that the visual impact from the project would be small in comparison to the benefits, which include a clean energy source and tax revenue for Florida and Monroe.

Bosley and Sen. Andrea Nuciforo have both supported this project and helped to move needed approvals, such as a lease extension, through the legislature in a timely fashion.

"We have taken a good hard look at this thing," Bosley said. "Wind energy is by far the most promising renewable energy for Massachusetts."

Opponents of the project have said the windmills will destroy a portion of the areas scenic vistas -- specifically the view of the Crum Hill and Bakke Mountain ridgelines where the project would be built.

Bosley said he believes, as Rep. Shaun Kelly does, that area scenic vistas will eventually need to be defined in order to prevent windmill farms from being placed in those areas. But he said this project will not have a significant visual impact on the ridgeline.

"I am very supportive of an off-shore wind project but it would be hypocritical of me to say to do it off-shore and not in my district."

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#### • Citation (aglc Style)



# Wind project gets state boost

December 30, 2003 | Republican, The (Springfield, MA) Author: STAN FREEMAN; STAFF | Section: News | 386 Words Page: B03

OpenURL Link

sfreeman@repub.com

The Monroe and Florida turbines would help the state develop renewable energy, a top environmental official said.

Massachusetts' top environmental official has ruled that a wind turbine project planned for hilltops in Monroe and Florida does not need to go through a state environmental impact review.

This keeps the Hoosac Wind Project, which is proposed by EnXco of California, on target to install 20 turbines providing up to 30 megawatts of power by the end of 2004.

"The project will have significant environmental benefits, and advances a number of commonwealth policies on energy and air quality," Ellen Roy Herzfelder, secretary of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, wrote in her decision.

While acknowledging the "potential for impacts on wildlife and the alteration of the appearance of two prominent and largely undeveloped ridges," she said there was a "clear and urgent need for development of renewable energy in the commonwealth" in order to improve the state's air quality.

John L. Zimmerman, a spokesman for EnXco, said, "We're pleased with the decision. We put a lot of work into getting the necessary studies done and keeping local people involved with the process."

The company plans to erect 20 wind turbines along ridges between Florida and Monroe. They would sell the power generated by the 213-foot tall structures to utilities. Each turbine can produce up to 1.5 megawatts of power, enough power to supply electricity to about 1,500 homes.

The plans will have to go before town officials for review, including a possible check of the project's impact on wetlands. Voters in both Florida and Monroe approved allowing selectmen to negotiate land deals with the company earlier this year. And at a town election earlier this year that drew half of Florida's 491 registered voters, residents voted 170-47 in favor of a nonbinding referendum supporting wind power.

If given final approval, the Hoosac Wind Project would be the largest wind turbine project in Massachusetts. The town of Princeton operates eight wind turbines. EnXco also operates an 11-turbine project in Searsburg, Vt.

A controversial wind turbine project off Cape Cod, opposed by many residents there for the effect it would have on ocean views, is still under review by the state. The Cape Wind project would involve 130 wind turbines, each taller than the Statue of Liberty, in Nantucket Sound. The project would produce 170 megawatts of power.

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### • Citation (aglc Style)

STAN FREEMAN, STAFF, 'Wind project gets state boost', *Republican, The* (online), 30 Dec 2003 B03 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/0FFCCF3E483067F3">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/0FFCCF3E483067F3</a>



RICHIE DAVIS Recorder Staff 12/15/03 MONROE -- Legislation allowing Monroe and Florida to lease more than 500 acres for electricity-generating windmills sailed through the Legislature this week.

December 17, 2003  $\mid$  Recorder, The [30 Day Embargo] (Greenfield, MA) 327 Words OpenURL Link

It was another step in the process of building 19 wind turbines on the ridgeline north of the Mohawk Trail.

The two home-rule petitions, filed by Sen. Andrea Nuciforo, D-Pittsfield, and Rep. Daniel Bosley, D-North Adams, allow the towns to lease their town-owned properties to New England Wind LLC for up to 40 years.

Monroe is negotiating a 30-year lease for 121 acres with the developers of the Hoosac Wind Project to site nine towers off Crum Hill Road, according to Selectman Carol Angelo. Florida is negotiating a lease for 351 acres off Bliss Road. The proposed \$30 million project, is scheduled to begin generating 28.5 megawatts by this time next year.

"These towns stand to gain between \$7,500 and \$40,000 apiece from the contract with New England Wind," said Bosley. "This is an exciting and important project for northern Berkshire and Franklin counties, which will bring much-needed revenue dollars into our cash-strapped municipalities."

Angelo said the money would be paid in taxes, rental and royalties for whatever wind power is produced.

First, however, both towns must decide on special zoning permits, on which hearings were held in early November, according to Hoosac Wind spokesman Sam Bittman.

The energy firm also submitted an environmental notification form late last month to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act group to determine whether a full-scale environmental review is required, Bittman said.

The company also is preparing to applying to the Conservation Commission in each town for wetlands that would be affected during the construction that is scheduled to begin next spring, and to apply to the Massachusetts Highway Department for permits to transport components of the wind turbines and towers to the site.

Bittman said Hoosac Wind plans to apply to the towns for building permits later this month or next month so that construction can begin at the start of next year's construction season. The turbines themselves would be assembled on the site in the late fall of 2004, he said.

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# • Citation (aglc Style)

'RICHIE DAVIS Recorder Staff 12/15/03 MONROE -- Legislation allowing Monroe and Florida to lease more than 500 acres for electricity-generating windmills sailed through the Legislature this week.', *Recorder, The* (online), 17 Dec 2003 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/10C5DFB8F6C1FD78">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/10C5DFB8F6C1FD78</a>



# Towns look at plans for wind farm

December 14, 2003 | Republican, The (Springfield, MA) Author: DAVID A. VALLETTE; STAFF| Section: News| 508 Words Page: C01

OpenURL Link

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MONROE - The proposed largest wind farm in New England has a dates with the conservation commissions here and in abutting Florida, with depth of environmental impact study an issue.

The plan would install 9 213-foot-tall windmills atop Crum Hill here, and another 11 on Bakke Mountain one mile away in Florida. The bladed towers would be erected in a series that follows ridge lines of the Hoosac Range.

The Florida commission opened a hearing on the project Thursday night, and will resume its evaluation in five weeks, said its chairman, Kenneth Geitz.

Geitz said yesterday that the delay is meant to give state environmental officials more time to deliver their analysis of the project.

The Monroe commission will get its turn Wednesday.

"We seem to have a very positive attitude among residents here," said Carol Angelo, a member of the Monroe commission and the Board of Selectmen.

"No one has said to me don't do it," she said.

The task of the commissions will be to set conditions on the project to minimize environmental impacts.

Up to now, the only environmental impact tasks for the developer, enXco, has been filing notices of intent to the two commissions and to the state, with some accompanying studies of impacts.

The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, however, is asking for more, and has called on the state to require enXco to file a full environmental impact report after determining the data supplied by the company is "skimpy," lacking details on wetlands and on how the large wind turbines would be transported to the remote sites, among other things.

The state Executive Office of Environmental Affairs has yet to rule on whether a full impact report will be required.

Todd Presson, manager of the Hoosac Wind project for enXco, said he believes the package of studies and plans that have already been submitted will be deemed sufficient.

"It was appropriate and adequate," he said.

Regarding transportation of the turbines, which each will come in three sections so that 60 truck trips would be needed, the pathways in are under discussion with the state Highway Department, including how to get around substandard bridges.

Since the GE turbines have yet to be ordered, where they will be coming from has not been determined, and that will be a factor in figuring the best way to bring them in, said Presson.

Also to be routed is the transmission line that will bring the electricity generated by the windmills to a substation on River Road here to connect to the electrical grid.

The Hoosac Wind electricity, under a just-signed agreement, will be marketed by the Center for Ecological Technology of Pittsfield and its partner agencies.

"If local businesses can achieve long-term stable pricing for their energy, while supporting a project that improves our air and water quality and brings economic benefits . . . this is a win-win for all," said Laura Dubester, director of the center.

Hoosac Wind, at an estimated cost of \$40 million, is to be constructed during the middle six months of next year and begin producing electricity by the end of the year, said Presson.

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### • Citation (aglc Style)

DAVID A. VALLETTE, STAFF, 'Towns look at plans for wind farm', *Sunday Republican* (online), 14 Dec 2003 C01 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/0FF886AAE88D300F">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/0FF886AAE88D300F</a>



WEST NOTEBOOK Rowe selectmen set to examine wind energy 09/27/03 ROWE --Encouraged by a state-supported initiative promoting the use of wind power to generate electricity, Rowe selectmen decided this week to appoint a five-member committee to look into the alternate energy program.

September 29, 2003 | Recorder, The [30 Day Embargo] (Greenfield, MA) 348 Words
OpenURL Link

Selectman Jack Williams brought the matter to his colleague on the board, noting the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative is promoting grants to help towns with the requisite wind and site to buy the wind machines and distribution system for their entire towns.

Williams noted several plausible sites in Rowe for the windmills.

"It's conceivable the town could establish a wind farm, or even a single windmill, and distribute electricity to the townsfolk," he said.

The town of Searsburg, Vt., for instance, has 11 machines serving electrical needs for 200 households. With just 250 households, Rowe would need quite a bit fewer.

The turbines stand 213 feet tall and begin generating energy at wind speeds of 9 mph.

"It's not just the power," said Williams. "This is also hooked into the existing power grid, so you're either selling power, getting a credit or using it on your own." The Hoosac Wind Project generates 28.5 megawatts, enough power for 9,000 homes.

A wind farm of about 20 turbines has already been proposed for two locations in nearby Monroe and Florida, and has begun the regulatory process.

Colrain to decide early retirement on Tuesday

COLRAIN -- A special town meeting will be held Tuesday at |7 p.m. to consider whether the town will accept the state's Early Retirement Incentive program this year.

Selectmen opted to take the issue to voters rather than make the decision themselves, which they are allowed to do by law.

Four or five town employees are currently eligible to retire, as they were last year when just one, Judith Sullivan, chose to do so.

Town Administrative Assistant Diana Schindler estimated the cost to the town for one retiree, beginning in 2005, will be \$9,700 per year for 15 years. The cost varies by person due to the state's formula and amortization rate.

Buckland selectmen are considering the ERI again this year after deciding not to opt into the program last year. This year there are two eligible employees.

In this case, Buckland Town Administrator Robert Dean told his board there, "may be some potential cost-savings" to the town if selectmen accept the program.

# • Citation (aglc Style)

'WEST NOTEBOOK Rowe selectmen set | to examine wind energy 09/27/03 ROWE -- Encouraged by a state-supported initiative promoting the use of wind power to generate electricity, Rowe selectmen decided this week to appoint a five-member committee to look into the alternate energy program.', *Recorder, The* (online), 29 Sep 2003 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/10C0F50898D95BD0">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/10C0F50898D95BD0</a>



RICHIE DAVIS Recorder Staff 09/17/03 MONROE -- When the sun shines at just the right angle to glimmer off the 200-foot-tall weather tower atop Crum Hill, it appears as a needle-thin line from the Mohawk Trail in neighboring Florida.

September 18, 2003 | Recorder, The [30 Day Embargo] (Greenfield, MA) 1342 Words
OpenURL Link

Patiently, 15-year-old Simon Zelazo and his mother, Theresa, point out the slender line in the distance. A cloud rolls by overhead, and the needle vanishes.

Along the ridge forming the boundary between the two towns, the Florida teen and his mother explain, nine more substantial towers are proposed, with wind turbines perched on top each. It's part of a \$30 million project that will also include 10 more turbines on the Bakke Mountain ridgeline that snakes down from the Vermont border, slightly to the west. When completed, the project would be the largest so far in New England.

"This seems to be a big, big issue," says Ms. Zelazo, who has lived for about 20 years in this town of fewer than 750 people.

Yet the furor generated by the Hoosac Wind Project has been as quiet as the "whoosh" used by proponents to describe the turbines' sound once they're erected. That should be by the end of 2004, if all goes well.

So far, things have gone smoothly for enXco, the Danish-based wind energy company with regional offices in Burlington, Vt. It plans to file applications this month for special permits and wetlands and subdivision approval.

In sharp contrast to the Cape Wind controversy grabbing headlines off Cape Cod, the proposal to site 19 wind machines in the opposite corner of the state has hardly caused a stir.

Hardly a stir

The wind is the only thing we have around here," says Zelazo, who helped galvanize support for the project by cofounding Citizens Using Responsible Energy. "That and rocks."

With colorful "plug into renewables" buttons and a newsletter, the home-schooled youth has researched and written to dispel what he calls misinformation about the project -- such as a neighbor's warning that a turbine blade could come sailing through his house, half a mile away.

"It didn't start out as a crusade," he said. An asthmatic, he and his family favor wind as "clean energy."

The opposition that did surface in Florida quieted after a non-binding vote that showed overwhelming support for the turbines. In Monroe, there was even less of a stir.

"We've had very few comments from people who are not comfortable with it," said Monroe Selectman Carol Angelo. "Everybody seems to be quite happy that we'll get some revenue from this. It certainly would be a valuable asset for property taxes and general funding."

Selectmen are still negotiating to lease 110 town-owned acres off Tilda Hill Road, and for payments enXco would make for electricity generated.

Monroe, which never benefited directly from the Yankee Atomic nuclear power plant in neighboring Rowe or the nearby Bear Swamp hydroelectric project, sees Hoosac Wind as a potential boon. Neighboring Florida -- bisected by Route 2 and deriving revenue from Bear Swamp, views the project as a development tool.

"The only reason it's happening is because of the money," says Derrick Wissman, a project opponent whose wife, Monica, helped organize the Hoosac Range Preservation Association to force a nonbinding town vote last May. Supporters of the project won, by a 3-1 margin.

"The town has spoken, and it's probably going to go through," said Wissman, who lives less than 2,000 feet from the nearest tower, and who expects he'll see most of the towers from the front of his Tilda Hill house. "But a lot of people don't like it."

### Visual pollution?

Wissman says he and neighbors worry about visual and noise pollution as well as a decline in property values.

"We have enough cell towers in the world and things sticking out of the ground," he said. "You'll be able to see them from a lot of places on Route 2, which is supposed to be a scenic highway."

But Adam Richardson, another Tilda Hill resident, said he's not necessarily opposed to the project, even though he presented the opponents' concerns at a March informational meeting.

"They just didn't have anyone to stand up and speak for them," said Richardson, who is interested in having the project fully aired.

Richardson, who's lived in Florida nearly all his life, said having the turbines in plain sight, half a mile away, "wouldn't bother me. They're not bad to look at, and they shouldn't make much noise. They're going to be big, but as with anything, it's going to be something you get used to. "

Richardson, who alarmed some at the March meeting by contrasting the towers' proposed 340-foot height -- from base to rotor blade tip -- with the Statue of Liberty's 305-foot height, admitted, "It's going to be put up, and people are going to say, That's cool.' A few months after, they're not even going to be a part of your vision. How many people stare out their windows for hours and hours?"

### Not too bad'

What bothers Richardson, he says, is that Florida officials failed to tell residents about the proposal long before asking them to authorize negotiating a lease for town property.

"It was something selectmen had and didn't share with anybody because they were going to make money on it," said Richardson. He added that the project has created "a lot of tension" in town.

Richardson credits enXco with being forthcoming with information -- a point that project spokesman Sam Bittman says fostered public acceptance.

"The opposition, as we've seen elsewhere, was pretty much focused on environmental impacts, that this would become an eyesore on the landscape that would diminish property values," he said. "Those are very real concerns for people, and we did very much honor those concerns."

In fact, Bittman pointed to a recent three-year study by the Renewable Energy Policy Project showing that rather than a decrease, property values near most of the wind projects studied have risen quickly.

Having available that kind of data -- which has never existed before -- was enormously helpful, said Bittman, as was having the 11-trubine Searsburg, Vt., wind project 10 miles away.

Project Manager Todd Presson agrees:

"There's no substitute for being there in person to see what it is they think they may be afraid of," he said, describing recent tours of the Searsburg plan, where a proposed doubling of size has met with general public acceptance. "People visit, and they're amazed, they're impressed and awed. They think they're really neat."

The greatest opposition to Hoosac Wind survives in neighboring Clarksburg, which will have a view of the Florida turbines without deriving any financial benefit.

Unlike controversy stirred by the Cape Wind proposal -- with 130 wind turbines, each almost 250 feet tall, in a 24-square mile area of Nantucket Sound -- the Berkshire project has met with public acceptance because residents are focused on economic development, Hoosac Wind proponents say.

Instead of what Bittman calls "a radical galvanizing with a lot of money behind it, in very much a class issue," Hoosac Wind's neighbors have taken a "pragmatic" approach.

### In Princeton

Similar to a Princeton project in northern Worcester County -- where the municipal electric company plans next spring to replace eight 40-kilowatt turbines with two 1,500-kilowatt models -- there is support from a public that's lived with the technology close at hand.

In Princeton, which will have 40 percent of its electricity needs met by the modification, instead of 1 percent currently, early opposition from people concerned about aesthetics has given way to "overwhelming support" from those who see financial rewards, said Municipal Light Department General Manager Jonathan Fitch. Beyond that, he said, residents have watched technology change over the past two decades, with equipment that's quieter and much more efficient.

Back in Florida, which was first approached about a wind project about 15 years ago, Theresa Zelazo sits in the living room of her house, which she regrets will have no view of the towers once they're built.

"I think people up here think wind towers would fit in with the landscape," she said. "We're a very rural community, and some people feel this would only add to our sustainable way of life, along with logging."

In contrast to those who see the project as a financial issue for the town, Zelazo views it as an environmental issue: "We should make our decision considering future generations, not just ourselves. Anything less would be selfish.

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'RICHIE DAVIS Recorder Staff 09/17/03 MONROE -- When the sun shines at just the right angle to glimmer off the 200-foot-tall weather tower atop Crum Hill, it appears as a needle-thin line from the Mohawk Trail in neighboring Florida.', *Recorder, The* (online), 18 Sep 2003 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?</a>
p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/10C0F50D324D8488>



Recorder Staff 07/29/03 MONROE -- Proponents of a 28.5-megawatt wind turbine project in Monroe and Florida are sponsoring public tours of the existing wind-power facility in Searsburg, Vt., on Saturday.

August 1, 2003  $\mid$  Recorder, The [30 Day Embargo] (Greenfield, MA) 251 Words OpenURL Link

Two tours of the Green Mountain Power facility will be conducted, at 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m., respectively led by Walton Congdon of Northfield and Martha Staskus of Vermont Energy Research Associates. Todd Presson, manager of Hoosac Wind's proposal for Monroe and Florida, will provide an update on the projects, including the latest information on the final construction plans and permit applications.

With 11 turbines generating 6 megawatts, the southern Vermont project is the first large-scale wind plant in New England, built in 1997. It is located just off Route 8, about 10 miles north of the proposed new wind farm site on Monroe's Crum Hill.

"As Hoosac Wind begins applying for permits over the coming weeks and months, there are people in Florida and Monroe and nearby communities who would feel a lot more informed if they had a clearer picture of how an operating wind farm works," said Presson. "Seeing and hearing real wind turbines in a real landscape will be an awesome experience that can address concerns based on the unknown."

Each tour group will be limited to 30 people, so anyone interested in participating is asked to reserve a spot in advance by e-mailing:

sam.bittman@verizon.net

or

zelazot@bcn.net

or by calling Theresa Zelazo at 664-1018. Reservations for each time slot will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

Transportation will be provided for anyone who needs it.

California-based enXco, Inc., the developer of Hoosac Wind, assists Green Mountain Power with monitoring and maintenance of the Searsburg plant.

On the Web: http://www.hoosacwind.com

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#### • Citation (aglc Style)

'Recorder Staff 07/29/03 MONROE -- Proponents of a 28.5-megawatt wind turbine project in Monroe and Florida are sponsoring public tours of the existing wind-power facility in Searsburg, Vt., on Saturday.', *Recorder, The* (online), 1 Aug 2003 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/10C0F524383720E8">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/10C0F524383720E8</a>



# Wind-power site offers public tours

August 1, 2003 | Republican, The (Springfield, MA) Author: WILLIAM SWEET; STAFF| Section: News| 257 Words

Page: B02 OpenURL Link

MONROE - The owners of a wind-power facility in Searsburg, Vt., will be offering tours of the facility tomorrow for the benefit of residents of Monroe and Florida, where the company is planning to erect 19 wind turbines next year.

About 25 people have signed up for the tour, said Theresa Zelazo, a Florida resident helping organize the excursion. Tours have been scheduled 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. However, the 1:30 p.m. tour may be canceled if more people don't sign up, Zelazo said.

The tours have attracted the interest of people from both Monroe and Florida, as well as surrounding towns such as Clarksburg and Williamstown.

Organizers have offered transportation to the facility, but so far the participants are car pooling, Zelazo said.

Walt Congdon, an expert in wind energy, and Martha Staskus of Vermont Energy Research Associates will present the main program. Todd Presson, manager of the Hoosac Wind project, will provide an update on its status, including the latest information on the project's final construction plans and permit applications.

The company plans to erect 19 wind turbines in the Hoosac Wind Project. The company would build the turbines along mountain ridges between Florida and Monroe and sell the power generated by the 213-foot tall structures to utilities.

The wind company is negotiating to lease part of almost 300 acres off Tilda Hill and Bliss roads in Florida and 110 town-owned acres on the Monroe side. It has made arrangements with a private trust owning 600 acres in Florida and the owner of 54 acres in Monroe.

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#### • Citation (aglc Style)

WILLIAM SWEET, STAFF, 'Wind-power site offers public tours', *Republican, The* (online), 1 Aug 2003 B02 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/0FCEA6D2C48F62A8">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/0FCEA6D2C48F62A8</a>