

# Wind shifts for Hoosac project

June 22, 2007 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Author: Editorial | Section: Editorials | 267 Words OpenURL Link

Friday, June 22 The Hoosac Wind Project now has its wetlands permit, after more than two wasted years. The state Department of Environmental Protection approved the permit in February 2005, but a protest by Green Berkshires sent it to the Division of Administrative Law Appeals, where it collected dust until May, when the wetlands permit was overturned. It only took acting DEP Commissioner Arlene O'Donnell a month to overrule that decision, noting that the appeals magistrate's contention that the culvert design would destabilize stream banks did not consider that the culverts fully span the banks, protecting them adequately under new state and federal guidelines. Ms. O'Donnell has extensive experience in protecting stream banks during construction, as does the DEP — hence its name. We hope the much-delayed project, which will construct 20 340-foot wind turbines in Florida and Monroe, will go forward without further stalling, contributing a clean energy source to the mix.

## Middleborough's gamble

Problems in the town of Middleborough, which has sold 125 acres of land to the Mashpee Wampanoag tribe for construction of a casino, suggests why a recent poll found that state residents favor a casino as long as it is not located in their town. A recall petition of the Selectmen who initiated the sale without public hearings is in circulation and an anti-casino group wants the attorney general's office to negate the sale because 20 of the acres in question are privately owned. The tribe hopes that by making the casino a fait accompli it will pressure the Legislature into providing the needed authorization. It and the town are acting in haste, and may repent at leisure.

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# Hoosac Wind obtains permit

June 21, 2007 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Author: Scott Stafford, Berkshire Eagle Staff| Section: Headlines | 533 Words OpenURL Link

Thursday, June 21 FLORIDA — The Hoosac Wind project's wetlands permit, mired in procedural appeals for about two years, was reissued late yesterday by the acting commissioner of the state Department of Environmental Protection.

The permit had been issued by the DEP, only to be withdrawn later when a group of citizens and an organization known as Green Berkshires appealed it to the Division of Administrative Law Appeals in February 2005.

On May 14, Administrative Magistrate Natalie S. Monroe ruled against the wetlands permit.

Her ruling then went to the DEP acting commissioner's office for review.

The acting commissioner, Arleen O'Donnell, could have upheld the magistrate's ruling, but she found that the main contention was without merit after consulting with the most recent standards established for the protection of stream beds and stream banks.

"The magistrate's denial was largely based on a theory that shading wetlands vegetation under (open bottom) culverts would destabilize the stream banks," O'Donnell said in a prepared statement. "However, the culverts are designed to minimize impacts to stream banks by fully spanning them, a design that is consistent with new federal and state guidance."

The project would construct 20 340-foot wind turbines — 11 on Bakke Mountain in Florida and nine on Crum Hill in Monroe. Originally scheduled for completion in 2007, the 1.5-megawatt GE turbines would generate enough electricity to power 10,000 households.

Officials at PPM Energy, the developer of the Hoosac Wind project, could not be reached for comment last night. But a spokesman for PPM said recently that the company was confident that the permit would be reissued, and a time line to have the wind farm operating by the end of 2008 is still in place.

During a phone interview last night, O'Donnell noted that her decision was based strictly on the facts surrounding the crossing of stream beds, not on the overall Hoosac Wind project or on the concept of wind energy.

She is uniquely qualified to make her decision, she said, because she has extensive experience and knowledge on the topic of crossing streams during construction.

"I also reviewed testimony, photos, citations and recommendations," O'Donnell said. "So I did some pretty deep digging."

Her decision was based on the Massachusetts Stream Crossing Standards, issued in 2006.

"I'm really puzzled how the (magistrate's) decision was reached, especially when the new standards directly addressed the use of open box culverts to preserve the stream beds," O'Donnell said.

"That is awesome. That's incredible. I'm excited," Florida Town Administrator Sue Brown said after hearing of the acting commissioner's decision. "I think it gives us a go-ahead and a better answer than we've had for the last two years."

Both O'Donnell and Brown said that the decision can be appealed to Superior Court. O'Donnell said the appeal may be filed in Suffolk County Superior Court, where the decision was made, then could be moved to Berkshire County Superior Court.

Representatives of Green Berkshires could not be reached for comment.

Brown said that the concerned citizens who appealed the wetlands permit have said in the past that if the permit were reissued, they would appeal it.

"The question is whether they'll be able to get an injunction" to stop the project during the appeal process, Brown said

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# DEP OKs windmill project

June 21, 2007 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Author: Ryan Hutton, North Adams Transcript| Section: Local | 505 Words OpenURL Link

Thursday, June 21 FLORIDA — The acting commissioner of the state Department of Environmental Protection decided Wednesday to allow the Hoosac Wind Project to proceed.

Acting Commissioner Arleen O'Donnell tossed out a recommendation by state administrative magistrate Natalie S. Monroe made in early May to rescind a wetlands permit issued to the project's former owner, enXco.

In her ruling, O'Donnell said the access road for the proposed 20-turbine wind farm would not have nearly the impact on wetlands Monroe had said it would and that any impact would be remedied by the current owner, PPM Energy of Portland, Ore.

"The magistrate's denial was largely based on a theory that shading wetlands vegetation under culverts would destabilize the stream banks," O'Donnell said in a prepared statement released late Wednesday afternoon. "However, the culverts to be installed are designed to minimize impacts to stream banks by fully spanning them — a design that is consistent with new federal and state guidelines."

Eleanor Tillinghast, spokeswoman for Green Berkshires Inc., a non-profit organization that has challenged the windmill project since it received permitting from the DEP more than two years ago, said she had not seen O'Donnell's ruling but was surprised at the decision.

"Given that I have not seen the decision, I am surprised that the DEP commissioner has chosen to overrule an 80-page, very carefully worded, very carefully argued recommended decision by the magistrate," Tillinghast said. "But I think this is an example of how politically charged the issue of wind power is and how dedicated the governor is to putting wind power on our mountains."

Gov. Deval Patrick has stated his support for alternative energy solutions, including wind technology. He is supporting the controversial wind turbine project in Nantucket Sound.

Jan Johnson, a spokeswoman for PPM, said she had not known about the decision until contacted by the Transcript. but she issued a statement upon reviewing a news release from the DEP.

"PPM Energy is pleased with today's decision by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection acting commissioner," she wrote. "Today's final decision on the wetlands permit allows PPM to move forward with development of a clean, renewable energy source for New England."

PPM Energy purchased the rights in February 2006 to the \$44 million, 2,300-megawatt facility to be built on Bakke Mountain and on Crum Hill in Monroe.

Green Berkshires and two citizens' groups appealed the DEP's wetlands permit for the project in 2005, citing environmental concerns, particularly over the building of the access road leading to the proposed sites.

A year after hearings on the matter closed, Monroe ruled that enXco had not accurately described the boundaries of 11 stream banks along the proposed access road, that the building of culverts would destabilize the banks of 10 of these streams, that the work would alter more than 50 feet of stream bank and that enXco had failed to perform a wildlife habitat evaluation.

Efforts to reach O'Donnell for further comment on her decision to let the project proceed were unsuccessful.

Florida voters approved a nonbinding resolution backing wind power 170-47 at the annual town meeting in March 2003.

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# • Citation (aglc Style)

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# Hoosac Wind turbine project now in limbo

June 14, 2007 | Bennington Banner (VT) Author: SCOTT STAFFORD, Berkshire Eagle | Section: News | 871 Words OpenURL Link

Thursday, June 14 FLORIDA, Mass. — The Hoosac Wind project planned for Florida and Monroe now hangs on a pending ruling by the acting commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.

Natalie S. Monroe, an administrative magistrate with the Division of Administrative Law Appeals, ruled against the project in three of eight issues brought forward by 10 citizens of Florida and representatives of Green Berkshires in February 2005.

#### Ruling issued

Her ruling was submitted to the DEP on May 14. It is now under review by the acting DEP commissioner, Arlene O'Donnell, who can either overturn the ruling, which yanked a wetlands permit issued by DEP officials, or back it up. A DEP spokesman said O'Donnell's decision would be announced in several weeks.

The project would construct 20 340-foot wind turbines — 11 on Bakke Mountain in Florida and nine on Crum Hill in Monroe. Originally scheduled for completion in 2007, the 1.5-megawatt GE turbines would generate enough electricity to power 10,000 households.

Officials at PPM Energy, the developer of the project, say that they are confident the DEP will rule that its wetlands permit was correctly issued. They do not say what their intentions are if the ruling goes against them.

Some are concerned, however, that if the ruling is endorsed by the DEP, there are some precedents set that would have to be applied to any future development project and some that are already under permit.

For example, the Hoosac Wind plan calls for the use of open bottom box culverts to protect the integrity of streams while at the same time a road can cross the stream, an accepted practice in modern construction projects that, until now, had been approved by the DEP.

But, because the use of an open bottom box culvert removes sunlight from that section of the stream, Monroe contends in her ruling, plants that grow on the banks cannot survive, and when the plants die, the stream bank's integrity is compromised, endangering the stability of the stream.

She also said that the developer and the DEP had not accurately depicted the length of stream bank affected. The report noted that about 50 feet would be affected, but because there is a bank on both sides of the stream, that number should be doubled. Anything over 50 feet triggers a requirement for a wildlife habitat study.

The applicant, she also ruled, did not "accurately delineate the top of the inland banks at 11 streams at the site."

Eleanor Tillinghast, president of Green Berkshires, in a previous news report said that the ruling was "a decisive win" and that the citizens who filed the appeal were "courageous" for taking on the developer and the DEP.

Jan Johnson, a spokeswoman for PPM Energy, said the developer is confident that the ruling will be overturned.

"We agree with the DEP's original permitting and are confident the acting commissioner will back the original permit," Johnson said. "We really, truly believe we're going to have a 2008 time line."

The plan now calls for construction to begin next spring and be operational by the end of the year, she said.

State Rep. Daniel E. Bosley, D-North Adams, said that the ruling, if upheld, would set a "dangerous precedent."

"My concern is what does this do to future projects anytime we have to cross a stream?" Bosley said.

He said that the level of opposition to this project leads him to believe that it is no longer a discussion of the merits of the project but that "it's about bleeding the developer of so much money that he eventually throws up his hands and walks away."

Narain Schroeder, director of land conservation for Berkshire Natural Resources Council, said no one is trying to kill a wind turbine project, but instead trying to ensure that it does not negatively affect the environment and communities.

"There are laws to protect the public interests and private property interests, and nobody is above the law, even if they purport to be a green energy source," he said. "These ridgelines matter, and we need to know what's there. We need to know what we're sacrificing."

Bosley said there should be a better process in place that determines the environmental impact and viability of a wind project proposal.

"We need to make sure it's the right project in the right place, and if it is, then let's permit the damn thing and get it up and running," he said.

Susan Brown, Florida town administrator, said that town officials support the project and that, during a town meeting two years ago, about 70 percent of the residents in attendance expressed support for it.

"We had been hoping to see the project up and running by now," she added.

Brown said that several aspects of the magistrate's ruling "are different from anything wetlands projects have seen before and conflicts with the government's idea of wetlands permitting."

She said that, in her view, the appeal permit was filed by parties who are hoping to kill the project.

"It all depends on how long the developer is willing to wait before he says, 'We've invested enough money in this, and we're getting nowhere,' " Brown said.

"We still believe in it, the developer still believes in it — the fight is far from over," Brown said.

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# Florida wind turbine project in jeopardy, decision due in serveral weeks

June 11, 2007 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Author: Scott Stafford, Berkshire Eagle | Section: Local | 865 Words OpenURL Link

Monday, June 11 FLORIDA — The Hoosac Wind project planned for Florida and Monroe now hangs on a pending ruling by the acting commissioner of the state Department of Environmental Protection.

Natalie S. Monroe, an administrative magistrate with the Division of Administrative Law Appeals, ruled against the project in three of eight issues brought forward by 10 citizens of Florida and representatives of Green Berkshires in February 2005.

Her ruling was submitted to the DEP on May 14. It is under review by the acting DEP commissioner, Arlene O'Donnell, who can either overturn the ruling, which yanked a wetlands permit issued by DEP officials, or back it up. A DEP spokesman said Thursday that O'Donnell's decision would be announced in several weeks.

The project would construct 20 wind turbines, each measuring 340 feet high - 11 on Bakke Mountain in Florida and nine on Crum Hill in Monroe. Originally scheduled for completion in 2007, the 1.5-megawatt GE turbines would generate enough electricity to power 10,000 households.

Officials at PPM Energy, the developer of the project, say that they are confident the DEP will rule that its wetlands permit was correctly issued. They do not say what their intentions are if the ruling goes against them.

Some are concerned, however, that if the ruling is endorsed by the DEP, there would be some precedents set that would have to be applied to any future development project and some that are already under permit.

For example, the Hoosac Wind plan calls for the use of open-bottom box culverts to protect the integrity of streams while at the same time a road can cross a stream, an accepted practice in modern construction projects that, until now, had been approved by the DEP.

But, because the use of an open-bottom box culvert removes sunlight from that section of the stream, Monroe contends in her ruling, plants that grow on the banks cannot survive, and when the plants die, the stream bank's integrity is compromised, endangering its stability.

She also said the developer and the DEP had not accurately depicted the length of stream bank affected. The report noted that about 50 feet would be affected, but because there is a bank on both sides of the stream, that number should be doubled. Anything over 50 feet triggers a requirement for a wildlife habitat study.

The applicant, she also ruled, did not "accurately delineate the top of the inland banks at 11 streams at the site."

Eleanor Tillinghast, president of Green Berkshires, said in a previous news report that the ruling was "a decisive win" and that the citizens who filed the appeal were "courageous" for taking on the developer and the DEP.

Jan Johnson, a spokeswoman for PPM Energy, said the developer is confident the ruling will be overturned.

"We agree with the DEP's original permitting and are confident the acting commissioner will back the original permit," Johnson said. "We really, truly believe we're going to have a 2008 timeline."

The plan now calls for construction to begin next spring and be operational by the end of the year, she said.

State Rep. Daniel E. Bosley, D-North Adams, said the ruling, if upheld, would set a "dangerous precedent."

"My concern is what does this do to future projects anytime we have to cross a stream?" Bosley said.

He noted that the level of opposition to the project has led him to believe that it is no longer a discussion of the merits of the project but that "it's about bleeding the developer of so much money that he eventually throws up his hands and walks away."

Narain Schroeder, director of land conservation for Berkshire Natural Resources Council, said no one is trying to kill a wind turbine project but instead trying to ensure that it does not negatively affect the environment and communities.

"There are laws to protect the public interests and private property interests, and nobody is above the law, even if they purport to be a green energy source," he said. "These ridge lines matter, and we need to know what's there. We need to know what we're sacrificing."

Bosley said there should be a better process in place that determines the environmental impact and viability of a wind project proposal.

"We need to make sure it's the right project in the right place, and if it is, then let's permit the damn thing and get it up and running," he said.

Susan Brown, Florida town administrator, said that town officials support the project and that, during a town meeting two years ago, about 70 percent of the residents in attendance expressed support for it.

"We had been hoping to see the project up and running by now," she said.

Brown noted that several aspects of the magistrate's ruling "are different from anything wetlands projects have seen before and conflicts with the government's idea of wetlands permitting."

She said that, in her view, the appeal permit was filed by parties who are hoping to kill the project.

"It all depends on how long the developer is willing to wait before he says, 'We've invested enough money in this, and we're getting nowhere,' " she said, adding, "We still believe in it, the developer still believes in it — the fight is far from over."

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p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/119BEEC58B83E428>



# Hoosac Wind Project Turbine project in limbo

June 8, 2007 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Author: Scott Stafford, Berkshire Eagle Staff | Section: Headlines | 868 Words OpenURL Link

Friday, June 08 FLORIDA — The Hoosac Wind project planned for Florida and Monroe now hangs on a pending ruling by the acting commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.

Natalie S. Monroe, an administrative magistrate with the Division of Administrative Law Appeals, ruled against the project in three of eight issues brought forward by 10 citizens of Florida and representatives of Green Berkshires in February 2005.

Her ruling was submitted to the DEP on May 14. It is now under review by the acting DEP commissioner, Arlene O'Donnell, who can either overturn the ruling, which yanked a wetlands permit issued by DEP officials, or back it up. A DEP spokesman said O'Donnell's decision would be announced in several weeks.

The project would construct 20 340-foot wind turbines - 11 on Bakke Mountain in Florida and nine on Crum Hill in Monroe. Originally scheduled for completion in 2007, the 1.5-megawatt GE turbines would generate enough electricity to power 10,000 households.

Officials at PPM Energy, the developer of the project, say that they are confident the DEP will rule that its wetlands permit was correctly issued. They do not say what their intentions are if the ruling goes against them.

Some are concerned, however, that if the ruling is endorsed by the DEP, there are some precedents set that would have to be applied to any future development project and some that are already under permit.

For example, the Hoosac Wind plan calls for the use of open bottom box culverts to protect the integrity of streams while at the same time a road can cross the stream, an accepted practice in modern construction projects that, until now, had been approved by the DEP.

But, because the use of an open bottom box culvert removes sunlight from that section of the stream, Monroe contends in her ruling, plants that grow on the banks cannot survive, and when the plants die, the stream bank's integrity is compromised, endangering the stability of the stream.

She also said that the developer and the DEP had not accurately depicted the length of stream bank affected. The report noted that about 50 feet would be affected, but because there is a bank on both sides of the stream, that number should be doubled. Anything over 50 feet triggers a requirement for a wildlife habitat study.

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Eleanor Tillinghast, president of Green Berkshires, in a previous news report said that the ruling was "a decisive win" and that the citizens who filed the appeal were "courageous" for taking on the developer and the DEP.

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The plan now calls for construction to begin next spring and be operational by the end of the year, she said.

State Rep. Daniel E. Bosley, D-North Adams, said that the ruling, if upheld, would set a "dangerous precedent."

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He noted that the level of opposition to this project leads him to believe that it is no longer a discussion of the merits of the project but that "it's about bleeding the developer of so much money that he eventually throws up his hands and walks away."

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## Court deals blow to wind farm

May 18, 2007 | Bennington Banner (VT) Author: RYAN HUTTON, North Adams Transcript | Section: News | 691 Words OpenURL Link

Friday, May 18 FLORIDA, Mass. — A state magistrate has dealt a major blow to the proposed \$40 million, 20-turbine wind farm in Florida and Monroe.

Natalie S. Monroe, an administrative magistrate for the state Division of Administrative Law Appeals, ruled Monday that the state Department of Environmental Protection was incorrect in issuing a wetlands permit to Hoosac Wind Power's then owner enXco. PPM Energy of Portland, Ore., purchased the rights to the project in February 2006.

"I recommend that the acting commissioner (of the DEP) vacate the wetlands permit that the (DEP) issued to enXco," Monroe said in her written ruling. "I do so because I conclude that the proposed work does not comply with the Wetlands Protection Act and the Wetlands Regulations ...."

The ruling says enXco did not accurately describe the boundaries of 11 stream banks that the project interacts with, that the building of culverts would destabilize the banks of 10 of these streams, that the work would alter more than 50 feet of stream bank and that enXco failed to perform a wildlife habitat evaluation.

"We're very pleased," Green Berkshires spokeswomen Eleanor Tillinghast said Wednesday. "We had the entire force of the state government against us saying that we were wrong, that we had no valid reason for appealing the superseding orders and conditions and what we showed was the citizens who appealed this were right."

Green Berkshires Inc., a non-profit environmental group, and two citizen's groups appealed the DEP's permit in 2005, citing environmental concerns, particularly over the building of an access road leading to the proposed sites. The 2,300-megawatt facility would be built on Bakke Mountain and on Crum Hill in Monroe.

The ruling comes a year after hearings on the matter closed. PPM representative Jan Johnson said in an e-mail that the company had received the ruling Wednesday and that it has both "positive and negative elements for the Hoosac project." She said PPM would await further action by the DEP.

Monroe's ruling will next be taken under advisement by acting DEP Commissioner Arleen O'Donnell, who can decide to uphold it or disregard it and grant the wetlands permit.

"I think it would be a mistake for the commissioner to ignore such a clear decision by the magistrate, and if the commissioner decides to overrule the magistrate, we feel we have a very strong case and we'll take it to Superior Court," Tillinghast said.

The project has some support — Florida voters approved the a nonbinding resolution backing wind power 170-47 at the annual town meeting in March 2003. But PPM's attempt in Vermont to expand the

Searsburg Wind Facility in Searsburg and Readsboro has provoked mixed responses. Readsboro voters last year overwhelming approved the company's plans for up to 24 turbines along ridges in the nearby

Green Mountain National Forest; Searsburg gave the project a thumbs-down last Friday.

Under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act, anyone who intends to "remove, fill, dredge or alter" in a wetlands resource area must request a permit. Both the town and DEP had to approve the project's

work, as it would be within 100 feet of a wetlands. Both did.

"Clearly the DEP made the wrong decision in issuing the superseding orders and conditions, and that's shown very clearly in the magistrate's ruling," Tillinghast said. "What's rewarding from our point of view is that she said the order should be vacated, that they should start from the beginning."

Representatives for the DEP would only comment that they had just received the ruling were still reviewing it.

Anticipating the project moving ahead, Gov. Deval Patrick signed into law two bills in early February that allowed Florida and Monroe to lease the land for the project for 25 years instead of charging property taxes. The towns can negotiate payments that would take the place of property taxes throughout the length of the lease. Tillinghast said the governor has opposed to the citizen's appeal and even the appeal process.

"The governor has made this case his example for why this appeals process should be ended," she said. "He's trying to abolish this process and our win is exactly why we should retain the citizen's right to appeal bad decisions by state agencies."

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# Contradictory foes of wind power

May 18, 2007 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Author: Letters | Section: Letters to the Editor | 457 Words OpenURL Link

Friday, May 18 To the Editor of THE EAGLE:

Thanks to Jiminy Peak for having the pioneering vision to install wind power, imagine the affect of every ski area and windy municipality on the planet following its example.

Jiminy Peak is proving that alternative energy is not only cleaner but also more economical. Unfortunately wind power has some very noisy detractors.

On Thursday, May 10 I attended the "Wind power — avian friend or foe" panel discussion in Lenox. In spite of the best intentions of the organizers, if I'd gone to that meeting knowing nothing about wind power, I would have left there believing that wind power is as evil as big tobacco, wouldn't have any affect on global warming and is in fact bad for us. Why is it that reasonable wind power supporters are afraid to go to wind power meetings? Who are these anti-wind dingbats and have any of them read a newspaper in the last 30 years? How is it possible to wear the mantle of environmentalist while fighting alternative energy?

We, as environmentalists, currently have a mandate to stop dumping tons of toxic waste into our ecosystem, and we are losing on some major fronts beyond Kyoto and Alaska. If we really want to save wildlife, let's help Tim Grey make the Housatonic River safe for animals, let's block the bulldozers en masse to stop the airport expansion in Pittsfield, let's educate our children about nature, so they can see our environment is not an abstract concept but something we are all part of.

If you think wind towers are visual pollution, why aren't you protesting billboards? If you're worried that wind power will frighten away tourists, I'm here to tell you that tourists are actually very bad for the environment in many ways (not to mention our local identity), so if tourists are scared by wind power, I say bring on those gigantic looming windmills.

To avoid further mass extinctions of all animal life, (including humans) we need conservation, wind, solar, bio, plus alternative energy we haven't invented yet. As an Earth citizen I support all alternative energy, as a Massachusetts resident I support the Cape Wind project, as a Berkshirite I support the Lenox municipal project and Hoosac Wind and quite frankly I think the current effort to stop the Hoosac Wind project is a truly quixotic abuse of the environmental permitting process and environmental fundamentalism in the name of a N.I.M.B.Y. gated-community agenda that treads perilously close to flat earth territory.

Let's all be good environmentalists, clean out our campsite, and get back to the business of saving the planet for all animal life, including our great grandchildren.

Wind power is clean power.

**NICK THIELKER** 

S. Egremont, May 14, 2007

The writer is executive director, Friends Of Mount Everett.

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# • Citation (aglc Style)

Letters, 'Contradictory foes of wind power', *Berkshire Eagle, The* (online), 18 May 2007 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/11935CECCBDFB7F8">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/11935CECCBDFB7F8</a>



# A loss for wind power, and state

May 18, 2007 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Author: Editorial | Section: Editorials | 278 Words OpenURL Link

Friday, May 18 The concern Governor Patrick has expressed about the layers of bureaucracy in the state that discourage business and innovation was borne out by the ruling against the Hoosac Wind project in Florida and Monroe by the state Division of Administration Law Appeals, a body that apparently knows more about wetlands issues than does the state Department of Environmental Protection, which gave the North Berkshire project the goahead. The appeal of the DEP's ruling came in 2005, and the division had all but taken the wind out of the project before its ruling by unconscionably sitting on the appeal for two years. Court action remains a possibility, but that means more delays. When a wind project is defeated, the environment is as well, as alternatives to energy sources that pollute the atmosphere and hasten global warming must be encouraged. And when projects disappear into the government bureaucracy, efforts to rebuild the state's anti-business image are undermined as well.

Using reserves is easy way out

The state's financial reserves are designed for the occasional and inevitable emergency, not routine funding, and both the state House and Senate are proposing going deeper into the reserves in putting together the budget for the next fiscal year than is Governor Patrick. The Senate proposes taking \$500 million from the reserves, about \$200 million less than does the House, but both are too high. In proposing to close business tax loopholes that unfairly reduce revenue and to allow communities to raise revenue through a meals tax, Governor Patrick is offering responsible alternatives to raiding the reserves, and it is not too late for legislators to consider them, as the budget process goes forward.

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#### No windfall for now

May 18, 2007 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Author: TheTranscript.com| Section: Local | 504 Words OpenURL Link

Friday, May 18 It is easy to commiserate with the towns of Florida and Monroe, which stand to lose thousands of dollars in revenue due to Wednesday's setback for the Hoosac Wind Project (Transcript, May 17).

The decision by a state administrative magistrate that the 30-megawatt, 20-turbine project did not comply with wetlands laws may not be its death knell, but there certainly will be no building on Bakke Mountain and Crum Hill anytime soon.

Good. Because it is far harder to commiserate with PPM Energy of Portland, Ore., which stands to gain millions in taxpayer-funded subsidies for building a wind farm that would generate just over a tenth of 1 percent of the electricity used in Massachusetts — and one that would replace not one iota of reliance on fossil fuels.

To achieve its end, PPM Energy would have to build 4 1/2 miles of access roads, ripping apart and blasting mountain-top land and crossing numerous streams and wetlands. As pointed out by Magistrate Natalie S. Monroe, the company did not complete a required wildlife-habitat evaluation, let alone dot its i's and cross its t's when attempting to meet state wetlands regulations.

The Transcript is not against windmills — in their proper places, with proper regulations. But these turbines, as we have pointed out before, are not the quaint, picturesque Dutch windmills of yore. They are hulking machines that, in Hoosac Wind's case, would tower a full 144 higher (from base to tip of blade at the highest point) than the 11 windmills in Searsburg, Vt., which proponents so often erroneously tout for comparison. The Searsburg windmills, standing 196 feet tall, fell just under federal mandates for lighting. If completed, the Hoosac towers all would have white lights flashing during the day and red lights flashing at night — as would the 338-foot towers on Brodie Mountain in Hancock, if Berkshire Wind Power ever gets them under way.

Jiminy Peak's wind turbine, to be erected this summer, is another matter. Foremost, it is only one windmill, and the bulk of the power generated will directly benefit the Hancock resort, which is making a substantial local investment in the project. At 253 feet tall, it will be far less noticeable than its proposed counterparts. This is a project we can support and one that may become a model for other ski areas throughout the country.

It is notable that the residents of Searsburg, still home to this region's only completed windmill project, told the Vermont Public Service Board via a straw vote last week that they did not want more windmills to be built by PPM Energy — which would like to erect 15 to 24 more turbines on adjacent Green Mountain Forest land, each a whopping 410 feet high.

The Berkshires and the Green Mountains should be home to small-scale windmills, placed in locations where they won't ravage the landscape, impact wildlife and mar our scenic vistas. We don't need giant monstrosities erected by out-of-state or foreign companies that blow hot air about improving our environment while reaping huge profits at taxpayers' expense.

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TheTranscript.com, 'No windfall for now', *North Adams Transcript* (online), 18 May 2007 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1193B0C0E3A021E8">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1193B0C0E3A021E8</a>



# Wind permit yanked

May 17, 2007 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Author: Jessica Willis, Berkshire Eagle Staff| Section: Headlines | 370 Words OpenURL Link

Thursday, May 17 FLORIDA — A state arbitration panel has dealt a setback to the Hoosac Wind project by rejecting a state-issued wetlands permit that would be needed to access the site.

The state Department of Environmental Protection had issued a wetlands permit to EnXco — the former developer of the project — in 2005, but it was immediately appealed by local wind energy opponents.

The Hoosac Wind project, which involves the construction of 20 1.5-megawatt turbines on ridge lines near the border of Florida and Monroe, was taken over by PPM Energy in 2006. The permit is necessary for the construction of roads needed to transport and maintain the turbines.

The Division of Administrative Law Appeals yesterday ruled that the developer's evaluation of the impact on wildlife habitat was insufficient and certain parts of the project didn't comply with the Wetlands Protection Act.

According to DEP spokeswoman Eva Tor, the DEP learned of the "lengthy decision" yesterday, and the findings were currently being reviewed.

"We have no idea what will happen next," she said.

According to a Division of Administrative Law Appeals spokesman, the DEP can reject the decision, which will "ultimately bring the case to Superior Court."

The Division of Administrative Law Appeals, an impartial state panel, noted in its findings that "the case is not about windmills or wind energy," and added "this appeal is limited to whether certain aspects of the project comply with the Wetlands Protection Act."

Eleanor Tillinghast, president of Green Berkshires, a local organization that opposes wind turbines, said the decision was "a decisive win."

Green Berkshires supported the two citizen's groups — one from the town of Florida and one state-wide "intervener" group — that "summoned the courage stand up to the developer and the state" and appeal the DEP's decision.

Tillinghast was named as one of the petitioners in the documents.

Administrative magistrate Natalie S. Monroe concluded EnXco "did not accurately delineate the top of the inland banks" of streams, would "impair the stability of the inland banks" and the proposed project "would require work on, or within 100 feet of, two types of wetlands resource areas," which are regulated by the Wetlands Protection Act.

Calls to PPM Energy yesterday evening were not immediately returned.

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#### Wind brake

May 17, 2007 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Author: Ryan Hutton, North Adams Transcript| Section: Local | 743 Words OpenURL Link

Thursday, May 17 FLORIDA — A state magistrate has dealt a major blow to the proposed \$40 million, 20-turbine wind farm in Florida and Monroe.

Natalie S. Monroe, an administrative magistrate for the state Division of Administrative Law Appeals, ruled Monday that the state Department of Environmental Protection was incorrect in issuing a wetlands permit to Hoosac Wind Power's then owner enXco. PPM Energy of Portland, Ore., purchased the rights to the project in February 2006.

"I recommend that the acting commissioner (of the DEP) vacate the wetlands permit that the (DEP) issued to enXco," Monroe said in her written ruling. "I do so because I conclude that the proposed work does not comply with the Wetlands Protection Act and the Wetlands Regulations."

The ruling says enXco did not accurately describe the boundaries of 11 stream banks that the project interacts with, that the building of culverts would destabilize the banks of 10 of these streams, that the work would alter more than 50 feet of stream bank and that enXco failed to perform a wildlife habitat evaluation.

"We're very pleased," Green Berkshires spokeswomen Eleanor Tillinghast said Wednesday. "We had the entire force of the state government against us saying that we were wrong, that we had no valid reason for appealing the superseding orders and conditions and what we showed was the citizens who appealed this were right."

Green Berkshires Inc., a non-profit environmental group, and two citizen's groups appealed the DEP's permit in 2005, citing environmental concerns, particularly over the building of an access road leading to the proposed sites. The 2,300-megawatt facility would be built on Bakke Mountain and on Crum Hill in Monroe.

The ruling comes a year after hearings on the matter closed.

PPM representative Jan Johnson said in an e-mail that the company had received the ruling Wednesday and that it has both "positive and negative elements for the Hoosac project." She said PPM would await further action by the DEP.

Monroe's ruling will next be taken under advisement by acting DEP Commissioner Arleen O'Donnell, who can decide to uphold it or disregard it and grant the wetlands permit.

"I think it would be a mistake for the commissioner to ignore such a clear decision by the magistrate, and if the commissioner decides to overrule the magistrate, we feel we have a very strong case and we'll take it to Superior Court," Tillinghast said.

The project has some support — Florida voters approved the a nonbinding resolution backing wind power 170-47 at the annual town meeting in March 2003. But PPM's attempt in Vermont to expand the Searsburg Wind Facility in Searsburg and Readsboro has provoked mixed responses. Readsboro voters last year overwhelming approved the company's plans for up to 24 turbines along ridges in the nearby Green Mountain National Forest; Searsburg gave the project a thumbs-down last Friday.

Under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act, anyone who intends to "remove, fill, dredge or alter" in a wetlands resource area must request a permit. Both the town and DEP had to approve the project's work, as it would be within 100 feet of a wetlands.

"Clearly the DEP made the wrong decision in issuing the superseding orders and conditions, and that's shown very clearly in the magistrate's ruling," Tillinghast said. "What's rewarding from our point of view is that she said the order should be vacated, that they should start from the beginning."

Representatives for the DEP would only comment that they had just received the ruling were still reviewing it.

Anticipating the project moving ahead, Gov. Deval Patrick signed into law two bills in early February that allowed Florida and Monroe to lease the land for the project for 25 years instead of charging property taxes. The towns can negotiate payments that would take the place of property taxes throughout the length of the lease.

Tillinghast said the governor has opposed to the citizen's appeal and even the appeal process.

"The governor has made this case his example for why this appeals process should be ended," she said. "He's trying to abolish this process and our win is exactly why we should retain the citizen's right to appeal bad decisions by state agencies."

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Ryan Hutton, North Adams Transcript, 'Wind brake', *North Adams Transcript* (online), 17 May 2007 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/11935C974501B918">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/11935C974501B918</a>



# Electric shock - Surprised by power bills? Relicense Pilgrim, conserve energy, plan for wind energy.

May 10, 2007 | Cape Cod Times (Hyannis, MA) 428 Words OpenURL Link

Ten years ago, the Massachusetts Legislature deregulated the power industry in an effort to spur competition and lower rates.

So far, the strategy hasn't worked. Massachusetts customers now pay the second highest rates of any state in the country.

What to do? The Massachusetts Affordable Reliable Electricity Alliance (AREA), a group of more than 65 business, labor, and community organizations, last week proposed 10 steps to help secure a more affordable power supply. They include:

Keep the power generation that we have: "While demand for electricity continues to grow across New England, construction of new generating resources has stagnated"¦," said Stephen Whitley of Independent System Operator New England (ISONE), a not-for-profit that manages the New England grid.

The operating license of Massachusetts' only nuclear power plant, Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station, expires in 2012. "As a noncarbon-emitting source of electricity, the commonwealth must maintain this clean and reliable source of electricity," according to AREA.

Longer term, Massachusetts would also benefit from new power plants fueled by wind, clean coal or natural gas.

Invest in energy efficiency. According to ISONE, the commonwealth could save almost \$260 million annually if it reduced its energy usage by just 5 percent. About nine percent of all electricity consumed in the U.S. powers incandescent bulbs, according to the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy. Switching to compact fluorescent lamps saves energy. Upgrade the transmission infrastructure. Massachusetts has approximately 2,800 miles of intrastate transmission lines. Some areas experience transmission bottlenecks that drive up the cost of power by restricting access to the lowest-cost electricity sources. Several power companies, including NStar, are adding or upgrading new lines.

"Support for these projects from business, labor, community, and public sectors is essential for the long-term electric reliability needs of the commonwealth," according to AREA.

Bring more natural gas to the area: About 42 percent of generation facilities in Massachusetts use natural gas for fuel. This heavy reliance on natural gas, while having no instate supply, makes the Bay State especially susceptible to supply disruptions and fuel price fluctuations.

Four liquefied natural gas facilities, which have been proposed in the commonwealth, must be approved, according to AREA.

But like its recommendation to develop large-scale wind energy projects, the LNG proposals should be part of a regional or national siting process that involves all the stakeholders. AREA supports the Cape Wind project and the 20-turbine Hoosac Wind project in western Massachusetts.

While we agree with most of AREA's recommendations, we take exception to its carte-blanche promotion of all wind energy projects without even acknowledging the serious issues raised by the Cape Wind proposal.

# • Citation (aglc Style)

'Electric shock - Surprised by power bills? Relicense Pilgrim, conserve energy, plan for wind energy.', *Cape Cod Times* (online), 10 May 2007 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/11B279EF3AC79B80">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/11B279EF3AC79B80</a>



# Example set on energy use

April 20, 2007 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Author: Editorial | Section: Editorials | 275 Words OpenURL Link

Friday, April 20 Governor Patrick's signing of an executive order requiring state agencies to reduce their energy consumption 20 percent in five years and 35 percent by 2020 sets a good example for residents and businesses across Massachusetts. As part of that order, the governor is requiring the agencies to use some clean energy sources and biofuels. Mr. Patrick has endorsed the Cape Wind project in Nantucket Sound, and in a recent visit to The Eagle editorial board, Ian Bowles, the state secretary of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, said an expedited decision on the Hoosac Wind project in North Berkshire has been requested of the state Division of Administrative Law Appeals, which has held the project hostage for nearly two years. If the board has objections, let's hear them, otherwise, get out of the way. We are encouraged that Mr. Patrick and Mr. Bowles have promised to push worthy environmental projects through the red tape that has bound them for too many years.

## Easy decision for EPA

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency asked the obvious questions of General Electric in returning the company's plan for cleaning up the Housatonic River as it winds south out of Pittsfield for further revision. The agency wants to know why no alternative technologies were offered even though promising ones have emerged since the signing of the Consent Decree, and why no cleanup proposal was made for the river south of Rising Pond in Great Barrington. A certain amount of posturing on GE's part is to be expected, but as these questions must have been anticipated we would expect a response to be forthcoming sooner rather than later.

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Editorial, 'Example set on energy use', *Berkshire Eagle, The* (online), 20 Apr 2007 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/118A7A2C00BFF0B8">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/118A7A2C00BFF0B8</a>



# Wind adds little, destroys much

March 24, 2007 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Author: Letters | Section: Letters to the Editor | 351 Words OpenURL Link

Saturday, March 24 To the Editor of THE EAGLE:

The Eagle editorial "Let wind project breathe free" (March 6) was very misleading. The Hoosac wind project appeal process is in the courts because the developers, politicians and taxpayer-funded organizations like the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, as well as state regulators, have done everything they could think of to circumvent the review process and ramrod it through.

The Eagle would have us believe this project will power 9,000 homes, which is highly unlikely, and implies that wind power will reduce dependence on oil imports from the Middle East. In this country, the total amount of electricity generated from oil imported from Middle Eastern countries is about one percent.

The editorial states "While every source of energy has its drawbacks, wind is one of the few that does not pollute the atmosphere." As a part-time power source, wind requires a conventional backup source of generation that runs at reduced output and efficiency, like an older coal-fired generator.

The Hoosac Wind project will produce pollution credits that can be sold to utilities to generate more pollution, which could actually result in reduced air quality for Berkshire County. It will cause deforestation and the destruction of natural resources and the scenic landscape.

This \$40 million project will receive generous subsidies from taxpayers and ratepayers and will create not even one full-time job, and few if any local construction jobs. It will produce no power in the heat of the summer when demand is highest and there is no wind, and will actually create demand to power the flashing lights while the turbines sit idol. It will cause educated, talented and creative people, who enjoy the natural beauty of areas with unspoiled landscapes, to look elsewhere to find unspoiled areas.

This is the new feel-good economy being pushed by big corporations like Media News Group, masquerading as your hometown newspaper. Big taxpayer subsidies to big multinational energy companies, no new jobs, big corporate profits, and the uglification of the landscape, with 400-foot towers, constant motion, and flashing lights 24/7.

# RICHARD ZONA

North Adams, March 16, 2007

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Letters, 'Wind adds little, destroys much', *Berkshire Eagle, The* (online), 24 Mar 2007 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/11819470A0931898">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/11819470A0931898</a>



# Use of wind power will solve nothing

March 17, 2007 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Author: Letters | Section: Letters to the Editor | 213 Words OpenURL Link

Saturday, March 17 To the Editor of THE EAGLE:

I was shocked at your editorial of March 5 titled "Let wind project breathe free." Your statement that the Hoosac Wind Project "will provide enough power to the grid to serve roughly 9,000 homes" is utterly ridiculous since it implies that the beneficiaries will be residential users. Somewhere between 60 and 80 percent of our electricity use is encumbered by business and industry. Furthermore, whatever electricity provided by the project does not go directly to residential users anyway.

Wind power has never caused a fossil fuel or nuclear power plant to be shut down. Wind power is so unpredictable (and generation is much less in summer months when demand is high) that all those nasty polluting plants still have to continue to operate.

You also write about with the "perils of global warming and of dependence on Middle Eastern countries for oil, wind energy is moving to the foreground" Windmills produce electricity, not effectively or efficiently, but that is all they produce. Less than 3 percent of U.S. electricity is produced by oil-fired plants. So given the paltry amount of unreliable electricity produced by wind farms, would we reduce our dependence on Middle Eastern oil? Of course not.

**CLARK H. BILLINGS** 

North Adams, March 9, 2007

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## • Citation (aglc Style)

Letters, 'Use of wind power will solve nothing', *Berkshire Eagle, The* (online), 17 Mar 2007 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/117F41ACF7A715E8">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/117F41ACF7A715E8</a>



# Eagle blowing hot air?

March 12, 2007 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Author: Letters | Section: Opinion | 367 Words

OpenURL Link

Monday, March 12 to the editor:

I was shocked, shocked at The Berkshire Eagle editorial of Tuesday, March 6, entitled "Let wind project breathe free."

Apparently, The Eagle did not check up on the veracity of a letter to the editor that I submitted on the subject of wind power a year or two or go. For shame!! That The Eagle is still kneeling at the altar of Al Gore.

Its statement that the Hoosac Wind Project "will provide enough power to the grid to serve roughly 9,000 homes" is utterly ridiculous, since it scurrilously implies that the beneficiaries will be residential users. Somewhere between 60 and 80 percent of our electricity use is encumbered by business and industry.

Furthermore, whatever electricity provided by the project does not go directly to residential users anyway. Since wind power operates at about 25 to 30 percent of full power capacity, you have to reduce your numbers considerably.

Furthermore (again), wind power has never ever caused a fossil fuel or nuclear power plant to be shut down. Wind power is so unpredictable (and generation is much less in summer months when demand is high), that all those nasty polluting plants still have to continue to operate.

The Eagle also writes, "As the United States wakes up belatedly to the perils of global warming and of dependence on Middle Eastern countries for oil, wind energy is moving to the foreground." Well, I gave The Eagle this information before, and these acolytes in the lap of Al Gore refuse to admit it. Windmills produce electricity, not effectively or efficiently, but that is all they produce. Less than 3 percent of the U.S. electricity is produced by oil-fired plants.

So, given the paltry amount of unreliable electricity produced by wind farms, would we reduce our dependence on Middle Eastern oil? Of course not. Foreign oil? Oh yes: The two largest exporters of oil to the United States are Canada and Mexico.

I know this is a matter of partisan politics and faith to the editor, but I would hope for some common sense to prevail. And some accurate observations. I guess we can expect none of that from the Gospel according to St. Berkshire Eagle.

Clark H. Billings

North Adams

March 11

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# Correction

March 7, 2007 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Section: Community | 57 Words OpenURL Link

Wednesday, March 07 The fate of the Hoosac wind tunnel project for Florida and Monroe is now before the Division of Administration Law Appeals after beginning with the state Department of Environmental Protection. An editorial in Tuesday's Eagle referred to the DEP as the agency currently considering the project.

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# Let wind project breathe free

March 6, 2007 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Author: Editorial | Section: Editorials | 386 Words OpenURL Link

Tuesday, March 06 It's been about two years since the wind turbine project for Florida and Monroe disappeared into the environmental bureaucracy, and it is past time it emerged. During a public appearance at a Cambridge biotechnology firm last week, Governor Patrick cited the Hoosac wind energy program as the best example of a state project mired in a review process in need of reform. We support that reform effort, and it should begin with an overdue decision on the proposed 20-turbine project.

The \$40 million project is expected to provide enough power to the grid to serve roughly 9,000 homes. Governor Patrick has signed special legislation for a payment in lieu of taxes agreement with PPM Energy Company, which would clear the way for the project to go before voters in both towns. Two citizens' groups and the Green Berkshires environmental group appealed to the state Department of Environmental Protection to stop the project, at which time it vanished into the DEP building.

If the DEP had moved this slowly on Pittsfield's PCB cleanup, the GE transformer site would still look like Dresden. It should not have taken this long to study the effect of access roads on wetlands near the proposed turbine sites. In his speech at Genzyme Corporation, Governor Patrick said there were 60 projects, with Hoosac wind topping his list, stalled in the appeal process, and he proposes regulations requiring the DEP to act within a specific period of time on projects based on their complexity. The Bush White House has demonstrated the importance of environmental regulations by attempting to break or bypass them, but they should not be used to kill controversial projects. Pointless delays in worthy projects will also discourage businesses from coming to Massachusetts.

As the United States wakes up belatedly to the perils of global warming and of dependence on Middle Eastern countries for oil, wind energy is moving to the foreground. Oil giants Shell and BP have dramatically expanded their investments in wind power, and while they are motivated by profit, not environmental altruism, their efforts are nonetheless welcome. While every source of energy has drawbacks, wind is one of the few that doesn't pollute the atmosphere. Berkshire County is a potentially valuable source of wind power, but it can't begin to emerge until the DEP stops sitting on the Hoosac project.

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#### Citation (aglc Style)

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# Let wind project breathe free

March 6, 2007 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Author: Editorial | Section: Editorials | 386 Words OpenURL Link

Tuesday, March 06 It's been about two years since the wind turbine project for Florida and Monroe disappeared into the environmental bureaucracy, and it is past time it emerged. During a public appearance at a Cambridge biotechnology firm last week, Governor Patrick cited the Hoosac wind energy program as the best example of a state project mired in a review process in need of reform. We support that reform effort, and it should begin with an overdue decision on the proposed 20-turbine project.

The \$40 million project is expected to provide enough power to the grid to serve roughly 9,000 homes. Governor Patrick has signed special legislation for a payment in lieu of taxes agreement with PPM Energy Company, which would clear the way for the project to go before voters in both towns. Two citizens' groups and the Green Berkshires environmental group appealed to the state Department of Environmental Protection to stop the project, at which time it vanished into the DEP building.

If the DEP had moved this slowly on Pittsfield's PCB cleanup, the GE transformer site would still look like Dresden. It should not have taken this long to study the effect of access roads on wetlands near the proposed turbine sites. In his speech at Genzyme Corporation, Governor Patrick said there were 60 projects, with Hoosac wind topping his list, stalled in the appeal process, and he proposes regulations requiring the DEP to act within a specific period of time on projects based on their complexity. The Bush White House has demonstrated the importance of environmental regulations by attempting to break or bypass them, but they should not be used to kill controversial projects. Pointless delays in worthy projects will also discourage businesses from coming to Massachusetts.

As the United States wakes up belatedly to the perils of global warming and of dependence on Middle Eastern countries for oil, wind energy is moving to the foreground. Oil giants Shell and BP have dramatically expanded their investments in wind power, and while they are motivated by profit, not environmental altruism, their efforts are nonetheless welcome. While every source of energy has drawbacks, wind is one of the few that doesn't pollute the atmosphere. Berkshire County is a potentially valuable source of wind power, but it can't begin to emerge until the DEP stops sitting on the Hoosac project.

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