

# Developers of Readsboro/Searburg project tout power of wind

February 28, 2007 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Author: Mark E. Rondeau, Bennington Banner | Section: Local | 991 Words OpenURL Link

Wednesday, February 28 READSBORO, Vt. — In a time when political and geological uncertainties can make the cost of fossil fuels fluctuate wildly, wind power can offer a steady and predictable alternative source of electricity. At least that's the argument made by the developers of a proposed wind-turbine project in the towns of Readsboro and Searsburg.

Depending on the number and type of turbines built, the project, an expansion of the Green Mountain Power Searsburg Facility on Route 8, could amount to a 45-megawatt electric generation facility.

"Rising and volatile gas prices will make wind energy more valuable because higher average gas prices raise wholesale electricity costs, increasing the value of energy produced by wind projects," states a petition from Deerfield Wind LLC. "In addition, because the costs of the wind project are not affected by fluctuating fuel prices, they are much more stable than the cost of generation with gas or oil."

In the 31-page petition, dated Jan. 8 and posted on the Internet, the developer details the advantages of the project to the Vermont Public Service Board, from which it is seeking a "certificate of public good" authorizing it to proceed with the project. A pre-hearing conference on the project will be held in Montpelier on Friday.

The project would comprise between 15 and 24 turbines on about 80 acres in the Green Mountain National Forest. About half of the turbines would be placed on the east side of Route 8 on the same ridgeline as the existing Searsburg facility. The remaining turbines would be placed on the ridgeline to the west of Route 8 in a northwesterly orientation.

In 1997, Green Mountain Power started operating the 11-turbine, 6-megawatt Searsburg wind facility on private land next to Green Mountain National Forest land.

Deerfield Wind is based in North Palm Springs, Calif.. It is owned and managed by PPM Energy Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Scottish Power, a Scottish company that provides electricity generation, transmission and distribution services in the United States and United Kingdom. PPM is headquartered in Portland, Ore., and is the second-largest marketer of wind-generated electricity and related renewable attributes in the United States. Last year, PPM bought from Hoosac Wind LLC the rights to a 20-turbine project planned for the nearby Hoosac Range in Florida and Monroe, Mass.

The petition from Deerfield Wind states that its project would help the state by increasing and diversifying "in-state electricity generating capacity." It notes that the license for the Vermont Yankee nuclear plant in Vernon is set to expire in 2012 and the amount of hydroelectric power available from Hydro-Quebec contracts is due to fall dramatically in 2016.

The project's annual energy production could meet the energy needs of roughly 14,000 to 16,000 average homes in Vermont, according to Deerfield Wind. The developer plans to sell the project's electrical output to wholesale customers on the New England power grid.

"The customers will include utility companies, power marketers or other service providers looking for a source of electricity produced by renewable resources," the petition states. "There is a growing demand for electric power produced from green resources in New England. The New England market for renewable energy is expected to increase by almost three times between 2007 and 2015. And wind energy is projected to fill a substantial portion of that demand."

PPM Energy Inc. has signed a letter of intent with Green Mountain Power for the purchase of up to 50 percent of the electricity from the project. Other Vermont utilities have expressed interest in acquiring a portion of the electricity from Deerfield Wind and discussions continue.

The vast majority of the project's facilities and activities would occur on federal land in the Manchester district of the national forest. It would be built over nine months during the 2008 construction season and would employ dozens of workers during construction, according to the petition.

About five miles of all-weather roads would be constructed to serve both the east and west sections of the project. The turbines would each be up to 410 feet high from base to the tip of the blades at their highest arc. Aircraft safety lighting — blinking red lights — would be mandated by the Federal Aviation Administration. The 11 Searsburg turbines are 198 feet high and do not require the lighting (the threshold is 200 feet).

The "useful life" of the project is expected to be about 30 years, after which it will be decommissioned and the structures removed, according to Deerfield Wind. The project would require three to five permanent staff members for on-site operation. Public access to the site would be limited with gates.

Teddy Hopkins, chairman of the Readsboro Selectmen, said the attitude in Readboro toward the project is pretty much "full steam ahead," and the project would be good for the town. Last year, residents took a non-bonding vote on the project, and the tally was 191-31 in favor.

Hopkins noted, however, that some people in the Heartwellville section of town would be able to see the turbines. Generally, though, their houses face south, away from the ridgeline where the wind turbines are proposed.

State Sen. Dick Sears, D-Bennington, said he's generally supportive of wind projects and has heard little opposition to this one. He said what's important to him are what his constituents think and what benefits the project would have for Southern Bennington County.

Despite wind turbines being identified as "environmentally friendly technology," not everyone supports the idea. The organization Green Berkshires has opposed such projects, including the Deerfield Wind proposal and the turbines planned for the Hoosac Range.

"Wind turbines produce very little energy but lots of tax breaks, grants, subsidies and price supports for the developers, at tremendous expense to taxpayers and electricity rate payers," Green Berkshires states on its Web site. "They are enormously destructive to the environment, requiring construction of access roads wide enough to accommodate 135-foot tractor-trailers, and extensive clearing for the turbine sites. Generally, they are located on remote, wild ridgelines that support diverse communities of birds, bats and plants."

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# Wind power plan gets boost

February 14, 2007 | Republican, The (Springfield, MA) Author: DAVID A. VALLETTE; STAFF| Section: NEWS | 391 Words Page: A01 OpenURL Link

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The only issue now is to clear up the legal challenges to the project filed by a group of Berkshire County residents.

MONROE - Gov. Deval L. Patrick has signed legislation that clears the way for the town to negotiate a 25-year lease with a wind-power developer for nine turbines atop Crum Hill.

The town is working in tandem with abutting Florida in Berkshire County to land the Hoosac Wind Project. Along with the nine turbines in Monroe, there are to be 11 on Bakke Mountain in Florida, along Hoosac Ridge.

Marcella Stafford-Gore, town clerk and secretary to the Board of Selectmen, said Monday that the legislation is an important step in the process, clearing the way to an agreement with PPM Energy, an Oregon-based company with several wind projects in western states but making its first venture into New England.

The only issue now is to clear up the legal challenges to the project filed by a group of Berkshire County residents. The group has challenged the state Department of Environmental Protection's findings that a road through wetlands, to reach the intended wind turbine sites, can be built if wetlands protection measures are included,

The governor's signing of the legislation was announced jointly by state Rep. Daniel E. Bosley, D-North Adams, and state Sen. Benjamin B. Downing, D-Pittsfield, whose districts include Monroe and Florida, and who filed the legislation.

"This wind-power facility will be of great benefit to the towns, for reasons of renewable energy and also income for both communities," Bosley said.

The measure gives the towns the power to negotiate tax agreements with PPM under which the developer will make payments in lieu of taxes.

Downing said the payments will be better than taxes because they will not require "lengthy discussions on assessments and valuation" and will better meet budgeting needs.

A spokeswoman for Patrick, Cyndi M. Roy, said that the governor is a general supporter of wind power.

"He is committed to alternative energy projects whose benefits outweigh the disadvantages," she said.

She said he also supports a proposed wind-power project for Nantucket Sound off Cape Cod.

Stafford-Gore said that Monroe is fully behind the project, with none of its residents publicly opposing it.

"Monroe is for the windmills," she said.

Florida voters, in a 2003 referendum, voted 170-47 in favor of the project.

See microfilm for staff map of Wind turbines Page A12.

# • Citation (aglc Style)

DAVID A. VALLETTE, STAFF, 'Wind power plan gets boost', *Republican, The* (online), 14 Feb 2007 A01 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/117533760AE29348">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/117533760AE29348</a>



# Patrick signs bill to allow leases for windmill project

February 13, 2007 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Author: Ryan Hutton, North Adams Transcript | Section: Local | 357 Words OpenURL Link

Tuesday, February 13 FLORIDA — As the Hoosac Wind Project waits for a state magistrate ruling to proceed, Gov. Deval Patrick gave the wind farm a nudge Friday by signing into law two bills to allow Florida and Monroe to lease the land for the project instead of charging property taxes.

The bills allow the towns to implement a 25-year lease on the land where the \$40 million, 20-turbine wind farm will be built. The towns may negotiate payments that would take the place of property taxes throughout the length of the lease.

The advantage to this arrangement is that neither the towns nor the project developer, Portland, Ore.-based PPM Energy, would have to endure lengthy and costly discussions on assessments and valuations.

"I'm happy this long-awaited legislation has finally passed so that we can now move forward on the next step and come to an agreement to benefit both the towns and the developer," Florida Town Administrator Susan L. Brown said in a news release issued Friday.

The bills were filed by state Rep. Daniel E. Bosley, D-North Adams, on Jan. 25 and were helped through the state Senate by Sen. Benjamin B. Downing, D-Pittsfield. In the news release, Bosley said the bills would help the towns budget better if a set amount can be agreed upon.

"This wind-power facility will be of great benefit to the towns, for reasons of renewable energy and also income for both communities," Bosley said.

#### Project still stalled

In August 2005, two citizens groups and Green Berkshires Inc. challenged the state permit for the project — then owned by California-based energy company enXco — to the state Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Appeals.

They cited environmental concerns, particularly over the building of an access road leading to the proposed sites on Bakke Mountain in Florida and Crum Hill in Monroe.

What was supposed to be a two-day hearing turned into 10 days spread over nearly two years, with thousands of pages of documents filed by both sides.

Magistrate Natalie Monroe is in charge of the appeal hearings and has yet to decide on a course of action since the final hearing in May 2006.

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### (W) Seeds sown for wind farm

February 13, 2007 | Providence Journal (RI) Author: Jim O'Sullivan; State House News Service | Section: News | 681 Words Page: D-02 OpenURL Link

If proposed legislation is enacted, two western Massachusetts towns would receive payment in lieu of taxes from an energy company that hopes to build the state's largest wind farm.

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BOSTON - Twin bills on Governor Patrick's desk could give tax breaks to an energy company looking to build New England's largest wind farm, on a mountain range in the western part of the state.

PPM Energy, the project developer, has benefited from a battery of state efforts designed to ease the birth of an energy-harnessing facility whose backers call it a model for the alternative energy strategies Patrick has vowed to pursue.

The legislation, fast-tracked this session, grants the towns of Florida and Monroe the authority to exempt the power company from paying property taxes on the private land marked for the 20-turbine Hoosac Wind project. Instead, the towns would negotiate unspecified "payment in lieu of taxes" (PILOT) with the firm.

By signing the bills, Patrick would set an example for tax treatment of wind energy projects, advance the type of renewable energy that he says will be a cornerstone of his tenure, and please a prominent state representative, North Adams Democrat Daniel Bosley, whom Patrick once welcomed into his Cabinet.

Officials from the towns, tucked into the northwestern part of the state on the Vermont border, say the distinct majority of residents there support the project, which is hung up on environmental appeals. In Florida, voters in 2003 backed a nonbinding resolution endorsing the project by a 3-to-1 margin.

Project advisers say the facility could supply energy for 9,500 average households. According to the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative's Renewable Energy Trust director Warren Leon, PPM has secured 1,500 acres for the project.

"The folks in the town are for it," said Marcella Stafford Gore, the town clerk of Monroe. "We haven't had any opposition from any resident in town."

The legislature passed the bills last session, but they were pocket vetoed by Gov. Mitt Romney as he left office, although the administration had earlier signed off on the project itself. Romney signed a host of last-minute bills, but vetoed others, saying he didn't have time to review them.

Without holding a new round of public hearings, the House and Senate passed the bills again last Thursday, giving Patrick 10 days to sign, veto or amend the bills.

Florida Town Administrator Susan Brown said the level of PILOT compensation hadn't been determined. "We don't know, because we are in the process of hiring a consultant to help us figure out what this project is going to be worth," she said.

Churning out 30 megawatts of electricity - far more than turbines in Dorchester and Hull but far less than the proposed Cape Wind facility - the project includes 20 turbines stretching 340 feet into the air. One of the turbines would qualify as the third highest point in the state. PPM bought the project last year from EnXco, Inc.

Conservationists worry wetlands and woods would be marred by more than four miles of new roads built for the turbines' construction, and say ripple effects could harm the area's economy.

"You can quickly lose your tourism cache if you destroy your landscape, if you destroy your scenic beauty and recreation," said Eleanor Tillinghast, president of the environmental group Green Berkshires. Tillinghast called the Romney administration's environmental review of the project "inadequate," and said the impacts on bird and bat populations are particularly worrisome.

But state and local officials defended the vetting process, saying they arrived at popular approval after public hearings and outreach.

The Massachusetts Technology Collaborative helped Hoosac's developers receive financing, by promising to purchase over \$17 million in energy certificates from the project if other buyers don't bite. The certificates are part of a state plan to encourage "green power" use. Brown said the bills, if they become law, would prevent the towns from having to assess the project's property tax rate every three years.

Under Bosley's guidance in the legislature, the state has put in place what Leon called the necessary cooperative elements to green-light a project. The specifics, Leon said, would vary, but the fundamentals needed for projects would be similar.

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### • Citation (aglc Style)

Jim O'Sullivan, State House News Service, '(W) Seeds sown for wind farm', *Providence Journal* (online), 13 Feb 2007 D-02 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/152426AC05D81FD0">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/152426AC05D81FD0</a>



# Bill boosts WMass wind power project

February 13, 2007 | Republican, The (Springfield, MA) Author: DAVID A. VALLETTE; STAFF| 262 Words Page: MassLive Update OpenURL Link

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MONROE – Gov. Deval L. Patrick has signed legislation that clears the way for the town to negotiate a 25-year lease with a wind-power developer for nine turbines atop Crum Hill.

The town is working in tandem with abutting Florida in Berkshire County to land the Hoosac Wind Project. Along with the nine turbines in Monroe, there are to be 11 on Bakke Mountain in Florida, along Hoosac Ridge.

Marcella Stafford-Gore, town clerk and secretary to the Board of Selectmen, said Monday that the legislation is an important step in the process, clearing the way to an agreement with PPM Energy, an Oregon-based company with several wind projects in western states but making its first venture into New England.

The only issue now is to clear up the legal challenges to the project filed by a group of Berkshire County residents. The group has challenged the state Department of Environmental Protection's findings that a road through wetlands, to reach the intended wind turbine sites, can be built if wetlands protection measures are included,

The governor's signing of the legislation was announced jointly by state Rep. Daniel E. Bosley, D-North Adams, and state Sen. Benjamin B. Downing, D-Pittsfield, whose districts include Monroe and Florida, and who filed the legislation.

"This wind-power facility will be of great benefit to the towns, for reasons of renewable energy and also income for both communities," Bosley said.

The measure gives the towns the power to negotiate tax agreements with PPM under which the developer will make payments in lieu of taxes.

More details in The Republican on Wednesday.

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DAVID A. VALLETTE, STAFF, 'Bill boosts WMass wind power project', *Republican, The* (online), 13 Feb 2007 MassLive Update <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1175881C576C5298">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1175881C576C5298</a>



# Tax breaks approved for wind power developer

February 10, 2007 | Worcester Telegram & Gazette (MA) Author: John J. Monahan | Section: NEWS | 716 Words Page: A13 OpenURL Link

BOSTON - That chilly arctic wind that has people cringing and shivering this week could be warming homes and delivering hot water in Western Massachusetts in future years, with the help of Gov. Deval L. Patrick, who approved local tax breaks for what would be the state's largest wind project.

The legislation will allow the small towns of Florida and Monroe to exempt the project developer, PPM Energy, from local property taxes on the 1,500 acres that will be used for 20 large wind turbines planned along the ridge lines of Bakke Mountain and Crum Hill near the Vermont border.

The bill will allow the towns to negotiate payments in lieu of taxes with the developer.

The project, in the planning stages for several years, initially was expected to be built in 2004, but has been delayed by complicated environmental and financing issues.

Last year the project was sold by the original developer to PPM Energy, which is a well-established wind farm operator with many larger projects in other parts of the country.

It would generate enough electricity for almost 10,000 homes, but would be very visible with 340-foot-high turbines perched on elevated sections of the hillsides and rising far above the tree lines.

The legislation for the local property tax exemption was approved by the House and Senate at the end of last year, but did not get to the Gov. Mitt Romney's desk in time for a standard review by the governor's office before his term ended Jan. 2. That left the legislation to lapse unsigned by Mr. Romney into a pocket veto, meaning it would have to be re-filed and reconsidered by the Legislature.

Both chambers however made quick work of the bill during its initial informal sessions last month, including it in a group of other minor bills that were among the first to make it to Mr. Patrick's desk.

Mr. Patrick, who promised to try to make Massachusetts a leader in alternative energy technology during his campaign and was the first candidate for governor to back the controversial Cape Wind project in Nantucket Sound, signed the bill for the Berkshire project with little ceremony and no public announcement.

While both host communities endorsed the Hoosac Wind farm, it has struggled getting to the construction phase, with financing plans and environmental hurdles. Besides the impact on the treasured Berkshire scenery, the project has raised concerns among some environmental groups over the construction of four miles of roads needed to access the facilities.

Renewable energy surcharges on most electric bills in the state that go into the state's Renewable Energy Trust are helping finance the project.

The Trust has awarded the project \$17,075,000 in guarantees for renewable energy certificates the facility will generate, which ensure a floor price and a market for those certificates if the developer is unable to sell them on the open market. That will help ensure the project is able to secure financing.

Warren Leon, director of the Massachusetts Renewable Energy Trust, said the local tax measure will help advance the project, which is ready for construction once a pending legal challenge to state permits for the wind farm is resolved. Initially the project was planned for construction in 2004, but the permitting issues have held up the schedule. Once approved, construction is expected to take six months.

Mr. Leon said while some opposition to the project is rooted in concerns about the general idea of installing large wind turbines along the elevated sections of the Berkshires, some people, he said, "don't believe building wind turbines in the Berkshires is a good idea."

"One of the important things about getting a project like this up sooner than later is giving people an opportunity to see what a significant wind project looks like, so they can make informed decisions in the future," he said. "After a couple of projects like this go up, it is going to make a difference in peoples attitudes. People, I think, when they see them they will think this is a good idea," Mr. Leon said.

Quick action on the bill by the Legislature and Mr. Patrick, he said, sends a message to alternative energy developers that the state is welcoming their business. "It's a good sign that the governor is going to act promptly and strongly to support renewable energy," Mr. Leon said.

ART: PHOTO

**CUTLINE: Patrick** 

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John J. Monahan, 'Tax breaks approved for wind power developer', *Worcester Telegram & Gazette* (online), 10 Feb 2007 A13 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/117428B4E4374D20">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/117428B4E4374D20</a>



### Wind farm bid before Patrick

February 8, 2007 | Dedham Transcript (MA) Author: Jim O'Sullivan; STATE HOUSE NEWS SERVICE Section: Local News | 264 Words Page: A003 OpenURL Link

BOSTON - Twin bills on Gov. Deval Patrick's desk could give tax breaks to an energy company looking to build New England's largest wind farm, on a mountain range in the western part of the state.

PPM Energy, the project developer, has benefited from a battery of state efforts designed to ease the birth of an energy-harnessing facility whose backers call it a model for the alternative energy strategies Patrick has vowed to pursue.

The legislation, fast-tracked this session, grants the towns of Florida and Monroe the authority to exempt the power company from paying property taxes on the private land marked for the 20-turbine Hoosac Wind project. Instead, the towns would negotiate unspecified "payment in lieu of taxes" (PILOT) with the firm.

By signing the bills, Patrick would set an example for tax treatment of wind energy projects, advance the type of renewable energy that he says will be a cornerstone of his tenure, and please a prominent state representative, North Adams Democrat Daniel Bosley, whom Patrick once welcomed into his Cabinet.

Officials from the towns, tucked into the northwestern part of the state on the Vermont border, say the distinct majority of residents there support the project, which is hung up on environmental appeals.

Project advisers say the facility could supply energy for 9,500 average households. According to the Massachusetts Technology Collaborativeís Renewable Energy Trust Director Warren Leon, PPM has secured 1,500 acres for the project.

Conservationists worry wetlands and woods would be marred by more than four miles of new roads built for the turbines' construction, and say ripple effects could harm the area's economy.

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#### • Citation (aglc Style)

Jim O'Sullivan, STATE HOUSE NEWS SERVICE, 'Wind farm bid before Patrick', *Daily News Transcript, The*(online), 8 Feb 2007 A003 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/117580E981FE1236">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/117580E981FE1236</a>



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February 8, 2007 | MetroWest Daily News, The (Framingham, MA) Author: Jim O'Sullivan; STATE HOUSE NEWS SERVICE Section: News | 264 Words Page: A003 OpenURL Link

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# Beware of developers bearing windmills

February 7, 2007 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Author: Letters | Section: Opinion | 412 Words OpenURL Link

Wednesday, February 7 To the editor:

The Transcript article of Jan. 16, "Wind project awaits bylaws," read like a press release for the developer Minuteman Wind. Lots of opinions from corporate spokesman Don MaCauley but very few facts.

Unfortunately, the media and the politicians have given these heavily subsidized projects a free pass. They have been sold as economic development and the solution to small-town financial problems, resulting from 16 years of Republican fiscal leadership.

Mr. MaCauley is quoted as saying, "I think it's a really good project." Good for the developer and landowner. No mention of the fact that on Jan. 5, the Transcript reported that a majority of the written comments received from Savoy residents were "overwhelmingly against" wind power.

"It will help the area's energy obligations." Translation: In order for the developer to reap taxpayer subsides and generate profit, it is the area's obligation to destroy the beautiful Berkshire landscape, to feed more power into the grid, to satisfy society's insatiable energy appetite and save the planet.

"It will help improve the economy in the area." Short-term construction jobs for long-term ruin of the landscape. The blades for huge GE wind machines are made in Brazil and shipped to project sites. Low-wage labor and foreign steel in a country with little or no environmental controls? Burning more fossil fuels and creating more emissions just to transport them here? Why are we subsidizing this, instead of real job creation?

"I think it will be an overall enhancement to the area." The perpetration of this myth continues to go unchallenged. Research has shown that the so-called "creative class" is attracted to areas with unspoiled natural landscapes.

The people we need to grow and sustain our economy are drawn to areas near the seacoast, lakes and mountains for the superior quality of life that nature's beauty provides. This is where they want to live, work and play. Many educated and talented people are fleeing areas where the landscape has been exploited by industrial structures, constant motion and flashing lights 24/7.

Where are the facts and the data used to determine that constructing massive machines and flashing lights are what is best for our communities and economy?

Sadly, the combination of the Savoy Wind project and the 20-turbine Hoosac Wind project will turn the summit of Mount Greylock (and the Greylock Glen) into an observation platform for a beautiful landscape trashed by visual pollution, with flashing lights that will never go out.

Richard Zona

North Adams

Jan. 22

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January 26, 2007 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Author: Letters | Section: Opinion | 413 Words OpenURL Link

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"It will help improve the economy in the area." Short-term construction jobs for long-term ruin of the landscape. The blades for huge GE wind machines are made in Brazil and shipped to project sites. Low-wage labor and foreign steel in a country with little or no environmental controls? Burning more fossil fuels and creating more emissions just to transport them here? Why are we subsidizing this, instead of real job creation?

"I think it will be an overall enhancement to the area." The perpetration of this myth continues to go unchallenged. Research has shown that the so-called "creative class" is attracted to areas with unspoiled natural landscapes.

The people we need to grow and sustain our economy are drawn to areas near the seacoast, lakes and mountains for the superior quality of life that nature's beauty provides. This is where they want to live, work and play. Many educated and talented people are fleeing areas where the landscape has been exploited by industrial structures, constant motion and flashing lights 24/7.

Where are the facts and the data used to determine that constructing massive machines and flashing lights are what is best for our communities and economy?

Sadly, the combination of the Savoy Wind project and the 20-turbine Hoosac Wind project will turn the summit of Mount Greylock (and the Greylock Glen) into an observation platform for a beautiful landscape trashed by visual pollution, with flashing lights that will never go out.

Richard Zona

North Adams

Jan. 22

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Letters, 'Beware of developers bearing windmills', *North Adams Transcript* (online), 26 Jan 2007 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/116E91275048FDB8">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/116E91275048FDB8</a>



# Wind project still in limbo

January 25, 2007 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Author: Ryan Hutton, North Adams Transcript | Section: Local | 622 Words OpenURL Link

Thursday, January 25 FLORIDA — The fate of the Hoosac Wind Project remains uncertain while both proponents and detractors of the project await a ruling from a state magistrate.

It has been eight months since the last hearing at the state Division of Administrative Law Appeals concerning the proposed \$40 million, 20-turbine project, which would produce 2,300 megawatts of electricity. Since that time, the project's owner, PPM Energy of Portland, Ore., has been anxious to find out if it can proceed with construction or will have to change its plans.

"We had been expecting a ruling in the fall of 2006," PPM spokeswoman Jan Johnson said. "There's no question that we wanted to go ahead sooner."

In August 2005, the project — then owned by California-based energy company enXco — was brought to the division of appeals by two citizens groups and Green Berkshires Inc., which cited environmental concerns, particularly over the building of an access road leading to the proposed sites on Bakke Mountain in Florida and Crum Hill in Monroe.

What was supposed to be a two-day hearing turned into 10 days spread over nearly two years. Thousands of pages of documents were filed by both sides. Green Berkshires claimed the road's plans may not adequately prevent erosion and storm-water runoff into nearby streams, despite the project's approval by the state Department of Environmental Protection. Green Berkshires spokeswoman Eleanor Tillinghast said large companies like PPM target small, rural towns that do not have the resources to properly resist a wind farm and claimed the DEP approved the plan because of political pressure.

"The DEP made a hasty, inadequate review of a very complex project," Tillinghast said. "The political mandate of the state is to be in favor of any wind turbine project. As a result, (the DEP) approved the plan with very little information and fast tracked it through the town's population."

In March 2003, Florida voters voted 170-47 at the annual town meeting in favor of a non-bonding resolution backing wind power.

DEP spokeswoman Eva Tor said her agency stands by its original decision.

"We believe we followed the letter of the law of the Wetland Protection Act in our review, and we are now just waiting for the ruling on the appeal," she said.

That ruling has been a long time coming. Magistrate Natalie Monroe was in charge of the appeal hearings and has been deciding on a course of action since the final hearing in May 2006.

Tillinghast said she has not been surprised at the wait and suggested that if the decision were going to be a simple yes or no, there would have been an answer by now.

After Monroe has reached a decision, she will issue a recommendation to the commissioner of the DEP, who will have the option to either approve the recommendation or disregard it and uphold the DEP evaluation. If the commissioner chooses the latter, Tillinghast said, Green Berkshires will appeal the decision to Superior Court.

"We have not come this far to stop if the ruling does not go in our favor," she said. "The destruction of our

environment, economy and community are not worth the small amount of clean energy and tax revenues the wind farm will bring in."

Johnson said the delay is costing PPM time and money. She had no exact dollar amount but said there are always costs involved in keeping consultants and contractors on retainer while a project waits for approval. She said most small towns where PPM builds are very supportive of wind power.

"We usually believe the majority of a population over the few individuals and organizations that oppose wind farms based on the visual impact they have on the landscape," she said. "However, this is how the permitting process works, and we just have to wait."

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### • Citation (aglc Style)

Ryan Hutton, North Adams Transcript, 'Wind project still in limbo', *North Adams Transcript* (online), 25 Jan 2007 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/116F97AC2E37B5F8">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/116F97AC2E37B5F8</a>



# Wind power? Think again, says Wind Watch

January 23, 2007 | Daily Hampshire Gazette [30 Day Embargo] (Northampton, MA) Author: RICHIE DAVIS The Recorder | Section: news | 1368 Words OpenURL Link

ROWE - Unlike the nuclear reactor that stopped operating here in 1992 after generating electricity for more than 30 years, and unlike even the hydroelectric generators along the Deerfield River, turbines spinning in the wind might be a downright friendly way to make power - and maybe even an attractive alternative to fossil-fuel power plants.

But don't tell that to David Roberson or other members of the National Wind Watch, a 1-year-ol d organization based in Rowe that tries to counteract what its members call the "feel-good" image of wind energy.

Roberson, who's vice president of the nonprofit group that tries to dispel wind power's positive spin and help local opponents of wind projects everywhere, points to the chickens, goats, geese and other farm animals behind his house, and to the dozen years he and his wife spent living off the power grid in Hawley before moving here, as demonstrating his concern about the environment.

"I've always been interested in sustainability and always considered myself an ecological person," said Roberson, eager to show he's no mere "NIMBY." He'd even contemplated building a wind turbine for his house before moving here eight years ago. But since the house was already hooked up to utility lines, he abandoned those plans and eventually began thinking of wind generation as an expensive, impractical proposition "just to make a statement."

Nation Wind Watch grew out of a "National Conference of Industrial Wind Opponents" at Stump Sprouts Guest Lodge in May 2005, which in turn was born of Hawley lodge owner Lloyd Crawford's investigation into drafting the region's first zoning bylaws to guide wind-power development in his town. The "Windbreak 2005" conference, and another last May, drew dozens of people from around the region and as far away as Kansas and Colorado.

Crawford said his "gut feeling" about wind power hasn't changed in the three or four years he's been studying it:

"There's a large gap between what people think can be accomplished with wind and what's possible," he said. "Are the sacrifices worth it?"

He figures you'd have to develop a new mile of ridgeline with wind towers every 12 days just to keep up with a 2 percent annual growth in energy demand, building them in forests, parks and wilderness areas - and that wouldn't do away with the need for ongoing "base-load" generating capacity.

Whether those calculations are correct - along with other charges and

countercharges about alleged pros and cons of what's typically thought of as a relatively benign, renewable power source - is the stuff of myriad "myths and facts" for proponents and opponents alike.

When Crawford decided with Roberson and others to

form National Wind Watch, he said, they found no other national group with that perspective.

Roberson - who coordinated the Hawley conference - was the group's first president. As a member of Rowe's Wind Power Study Committee, he also helped his town decide against siting a wind turbine there.

The group's formation comes as wind power is being broached as a way to help build a "sustainable energy" portfolio in Massachusetts and other states that are trying to move away from fossil fuel-burning plants.

But National Wind Watch argues that the economics of wind power are overstated, it's more heavily subsidized than it should be and that the media tends to overlook drawbacks like bird and bat deaths and scarring of the land during construction in wilderness areas.

"You can't get away from the visual thing either," said Roberson.

"It's very socially divisive just about everywhere these things are proposed. It typically leav es lasting scars in a community between the people who want it and the people who don't. There's a misconception that it's clean and green, and it doesn't have these impacts."

### Web presence

National Wind Watch uses its Web site, wind-watch.org, to distribute information and news updates, as well as to network among members and sell anti-wind materials.

It also has a second site, aweo.org, that mimics the wind industry's American Wind Energy Association's awea.org site.

Many National Wind Watch positions, not surprisingly, directly contradict those of wind proponents like AWEA, with the opponents contending, for example, that subsidies for wind may be small in absolute dollars but large per unit of energy. The pro-wind organization points to National Audubon Society support for wind energy projects to discount the claims of bird kills.

Roberson has attended hearings on the proposed 20-turbine, 30-megawatt Hoosac Wind project planned for neighboring Monroe and Florida, although

the project site would not be visible from his home.

"People see them as being symbolic of hope and sustainability and all these wonderful goals they really can't achieve," Roberson said.

"They say it's a symbol of our dedication to improving the planet. We need more than symbols. The worst thing we can do is pat yourself on the back without examining the reality."

Hoosac Wind, after receiving approval from the Florida Conservation Commission and state Department of Environmental Protection,

has been mired for more than 1 years in appeal before the state Division of Administration Law Appeal, while the project has passed from Danish-based enXco to Scottish-owned PPM Energy.

"Hoosac Wind has 85 percent local support," said Sam Bittman, who has worked as a consultant on the project.

"There's a very small, well-financed and organized minority that has been able to use the law as a delay to hold it up."

Bittman believes that, despite protracted opposition to large projects like the 130-turbine offshore Cape Wind project - which recently cleared a congressional hurdle, "this is a coming, happening thing.

"Has wind oversold itself? I've never felt that. No one has suggested that wind is going to turn the (energy) situation around. But where do you begin to solve such an enormous problem?"

Roberson said Wind-Watch doesn't take a position on how to meet the country's energy needs without wind power.

But personally he favors conserving energy and cleaning up polluting sources like coal, rather than expanding the role of wind turbines.

He doesn't see wind energy as ever being significant in the energy mix, and predicts it won't significantly reduce oil consumption.

Sally Wright, a wind-energy researche r at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, counters, "For every kilowatt hour that you make with a wind turbine, that's a kilowatt hour not made with a fossil plant. That's the important element."

Wright said that advances in turbine design - making them larger, of more efficient materials and siting them higher, where wind speeds are greater - has helped bring down the cost per kilowatt hour generated.

#### Wind battles

Wright said there are plenty of political fights at all levels about wind power, but she believes that once people become more familiar with projects, they'll see that many arguments of the opponents - about bird mortality, noise and damage to tourism - are myths, and development of wind projects will speed up.

Like Roberson, she paints the wind energy battles as pitting rich against poor interests. But while he paints wealthy, urban-based interests trying to site wind projects in sparsely populated areas where people are at a disadvantage at fighting back, Wrigh t said, "You can put a coal plant near poor people and they can't hire lawyers to fight it.

"But if you put something that doesn't have a net environmental impact in the sight of rich people, in coastal zones and along ridge tops, they've got money to

fight it. That's why we're seeing this. The fight is coming up, and rich people are more able to keep it out."

Wright is on a technical panel that's advising the Franklin Regional Council of Governments and Pioneer Valley Regional Planning Commissio n on a strategic energy plan for the valley that aims to develop 100 megawatts of sustainable energy in the three-county area by 2009.

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"In Franklin County, we're all hoping the Hoosac Wind process goes through," Labich said, adding that there's also interest in municipal wind projects for neighboring Chester

and Blandford as well as for Shutesbury.

"The technology isn't the issue; it's the siting of the technology, and how you apply it," he said.

Making sure that projects are appropriate in size and ownership will be key issues as proponents and opponents wrestle with how to make clean, efficient energy, he said.

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#### • Citation (aglc Style)

RICHIE DAVIS The Recorder, 'Wind power? Think again, says Wind Watch', *Daily Hampshire Gazette* (online), 23 Jan 2007 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/124B1374274A6920">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/124B1374274A6920</a>



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January 16, 2007 | Recorder, The [30 Day Embargo] (Greenfield, MA) 1336 Words
OpenURL Link

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On the Web: www.wind-watch.org

www.awea.org

### www.hoosacwind.com

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# Bosley wraps up business

January 4, 2007 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Author: Jennifer Huberdeau, North Adams Transcript| Section: Local | 625 Words OpenURL Link

Thursday, January 4 NORTH ADAMS — The decision to leave the state Legislature was not taken lightly by state Rep. Daniel E. Bosley, who is expected to resign from his post as early as today.

Bosley, who was sworn into his 11th term on Beacon Hill on Wednesday, has accepted an offer to become incoming Gov. Deval Patrick's top economic adviser. The decision came as a surprise to many Berkshire residents, as Bosley had said shortly after the November election that he had no intentions to leave the House for the new administration.

"It was a hard decision," he said Wednesday morning. "The governor-elect called me on a Thursday in December and said 'Bos, I want you to come work in my office and help me rebuild the state's economy.' That's a hard offer to refuse, but it's also a hard offer to take after 20 years. It's not an easy decision to make, but I think it is the right decision."

Bosley said he would most likely submit his letter of resignation at the beginning of today's legislative session, which starts at 11 a.m.

"I'll be submitting a letter of resignation that becomes effective upon my appointment," he said. "If I resigned immediately, I would have no standing to file any bills for this session."

Even though his resignation will fall within the first days of the legislative session, he said there are at least a "half-dozen bills" that he needs to file before leaving.

"As long as I'm sworn in, I can file the bills (on Wednesday)," Bosley said. "There are about a half-dozen bills I care very deeply about and have to do with the district, which I need to file."

While many of the bills he has worked on will be passed on to other legislators, there are several bills that are still in the process of being approved, to which he is attached. One of those bills, concerning the windmill project slated for Florida and Monroe, was passed Tuesday night.

"The bill, which allows payments in lieu of taxes for Monroe and Florida, was put on the governor's desk," Bosley said. "Hopefully, it will be approved by Friday."

Both Florida and Monroe voters approved at last year's town meetings to allow the Hoosac Wind Project to make specific payments to the towns each year, instead of paying taxes.

"This designates a permanent line of financing for the next 20 or 30 years for these towns," Bosley said. "It also allows the towns to negotiate what the company will be paying. It levels the playing field for both parties."

However, he said, the towns cannot move forward with their plans without a special act of the Legislature.

And while he may be spending more time in Boston as Patrick's top economic adviser, Bosley is not planning on taking up permanent residence in the state's capital.

"I'm a Berkshire's boy," he said. "I was born and raised in the First District and I have no plans to move. I'll be spending more time there, all week, but I'll be coming home on the weekends to recharge my batteries."

He also believes retaining his home in North Adams is vital to his new role.

"I think one of the things that has made me effective for so long is my traveling from one end of the state to the other," Bosley said. "I see the state economy first hand as I'm driving back and forth. I'm familiar with it on the local level. The incoming governor has told me that he wants to rebuild the economy statewide. He said he wants to be in Berkshire and Franklin counties and that excites me."

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Jennifer Huberdeau, North Adams Transcript, 'Bosley wraps up business', *North Adams Transcript* (online), 4 Jan 2007 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/11676008C6895700">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/11676008C6895700</a>



# Firm looks beyond Vt. for wind projects

October 19, 2006 | Brattleboro Reformer (VT)

Author: CATE LECUYER, Reformer Staff Despite the failure to launch, so to speak, Zimmerman said wind development is a long and steady

process. Section: Local News 574 Words

OpenURL Link

Thursday, October 19 WATERBURY -- One of the state's leading research firms in wind power development seeks to build outside of Vermont.

Vermont Environmental Research Associates -- consultants for both the current wind farm in Searsburg, the proposed Deerfield Wind expansion at the same site and the proposed Hoosac Wind project in Florida, Mass. -- were hired by Noble Environmental Power to explore projects across New England.

"That will allow us to expand our horizons across the Vermont border," said John Zimmerman of VERA.

It's an opportunity for the small Vermont firm to grow and expand its business, Zimmerman said.

He doesn't know by how much at this point, but like wind development, it will be a slow and steady process, with funding coming from Noble.

Based out of Connecticut, Noble has six projects in New York and one in Michigan, which collectively produce more than 1,000 megawatts of renewable energy.

The decision to explore sites outside of Vermont comes in the midst of a political battle over renewable energy.

With Gov. Jim Douglas opposed to large-scale wind projects, and his Democratic opponent Scudder Parker supportive of wind power, it has become a major political issue.

Recently, the state hasn't had a productive track record when it comes to wind projects. Think back to June when Glebe Mountain Wind Energy developers in Londonderry called off the project in the face of local and state opposition, and to August when the Vermont Public Service Board rejected the East Haven wind project in the Northeast Kingdom, and the project in Sheffield.

The Searsburg windmills, for instance, were proposed in 1992; permits were finally in place by 1996, and it was built in 1997. And there was little opposition.

"It will expand several political careers to get a wind project developed," Zimmerman said. "We can't make our renewable energy decisions based on the short-term commitments of some political candidates. "

A slow start and politics are not factors behind VERA's decision to venture outside of Vermont, he said.

It has more to do with expanding VERA as the nation moves toward clean and renewable energy.

Zimmerman said VERA decided to work with Noble because they both have similar business philosophies that involve the community early on in finding a location and securing permits.

"(Noble) has the financial wherewithal to make that strategy work," Zimmerman said.

He would not discuss the financial agreement between the two organizations, nor the timeframe of the contract.

"That's between Noble and our company," he said.

Noble spokeswoman Anna Giovinetto said the development company also wants to expand, and recognizes the potential in windy New England, especially the northern part of the region.

Working with VERA makes sense, Giovinetto said. Noble has the resources and VERA has more than 20 years of local connections.

"VERA's knowledge of the area and reputation in the region make them a perfect partner," Noble CEO Charles C. Hinckley said in a prepared statement. "We look forward to working closely with them as we begin our preliminary site analysis."

Zimmerman said scouting New England peaks and finding communities willing to build the large turbines on their ridgelines will take a few years.

There is strong support for wind power in Vermont -- about 80 percent -- but once there's a proposal in someone's backyard, support drops to about 70 percent, Zimmerman said.

"People have heard both sides of the debate, and here it is."

Cate Lecuyer can be reached at clecuyer@reformer.com or (802) 254-2311, ext. 277.

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CATE LECUYER, Reformer Staff Despite the failure to launch, so to speak, Zimmerman said wind development is a long and steady process., 'Firm looks beyond Vt. for wind projects', *Brattleboro Reformer* (online), 19 Oct 2006 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/114DFA1794E7FD60">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/114DFA1794E7FD60</a>



### Issue of wind is where?

September 17, 2006 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Author: Lauren R. Stevens | Section: Other Opinions | 578 Words OpenURL Link

Monday, September 18 WILLIAMSTOWN

THE HUGE energy conglomerate, ScottishPower, has become the developer of the former EnXco Hoosac Wind project in Florida and Monroe, and the Deerfield Wind project in and around Searsburg, Vt. ScottishPower is the largest generator of wind power in the United Kingdom, one of the largest providers of wind energy in the United States and the developer of the single largest wind farm in Europe, the 322 megawatt Whitelee project south of Glasgow. Its 140 turbines will provide the power necessary for approximately the number of homes on the city, about 200,000.

ScottishPower also provides natural gas storage and electrical networking in the UK. The company has a Canadian division.

ScottishPower's U.S. division, PPM Energy, based in Portland, Ore., generates 830 MW currently, with a goal of 2,300 MW by the year 2010.

Why? Because "wind is the least cost renewable technology," according to SP.

Hoosac wind awaits adjudication of an appeal of its wetlands permit. In the meanwhile, PPM Energy is continuing its negotiations with National Grid regarding interconnection. PPM spokesperson Jan Johnson says the company expects construction to begin in 2007 or, more likely, 2008.

The wind farm in Florida and Monroe would supply enough electricity to power 9,500 average households, or five percent of the electricity Berkshire residents consume.

Deerfield Wind, along the Deerfield River in Vermont, would place 20 to 30 turbines in Searsburg and Readsburo parallel to the ones already in place in Searsburg. Some of the land involved is in Green Mountain National Forest — it would be the first wind farm in the country to be in a National Forest. Therefore PPM Energy is involved in federal permitting for those sites and is close to submitting the papers necessary for its state permitting. "We hope to secure all permits and begin construction in 2008," says Johnson.

The turbines would generate 30 to 45 MW, enough to provide power for 14,000 to 16,000 homes (compared to some 2,000 homes for the current seven turbines at Searsburg). They would displace by two million pounds annually the need to generate electricity by fossil fuels in New England.

Let's say it again. Wind energy does not create airborne toxins, acid rain, emissions that cause global weather change or hazardous waste. Neither local water supplies nor other irreplaceable resources are consumed. It is hard to see how being opposed to wind energy can be considered an environmental position.

Wind is the least expensive energy among renewables and is comparable to traditional energy costs, even without factoring in global security issues or loss of life in mining accidents. The steep decline in the cost of wind power has actually brought it lower than the cost of bulk power since the year 2000, according to PPM.

Wind is the fastest growing energy resource in the world. And, once the high installation costs have been paid, the "fuel" costs will always remain the same: zero.

Those opposed to wind power in Berkshire or Bennington counties often set up alternatives, such as 130 turbines off Cape Cod or more energy conservation. The truth is, however, that we need more conservation, Cape Wind and turbines on a few of our ridges.

It puzzles me why the debate about wind power should divide people between those who are pro-wind and those who claim to be against, when the real issues should be concerning the best place to site wind turbines.

Anyway, that's how it looks from Stamford, Vermont.

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### • Citation (aglc Style)

Lauren R. Stevens, 'Issue of wind is where?', *Berkshire Eagle, The* (online), 17 Sep 2006 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1143B547C3BCC1B0">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/1143B547C3BCC1B0</a>



# Romney plan backs wind power

August 28, 2006 | Berkshire Eagle, The (Pittsfield, MA) Author: Christopher Marcisz, Berkshire Eagle Staff| Section: Headlines | 887 Words OpenURL Link

Monday, August 28 A long-term energy plan proposed by Gov. Mitt Romney could make the Berkshires fertile ground for renewable energy projects such as wind power.

But with four significant wind-energy projects already working their way toward completion in the region, some concern has been raised that the initiative will balloon the number of turbines built here.

"He's looking to the Berkshires to show he is for renewable energy and wind power, and we don't have the political clout to put him in an awkward position," said Eleanor Tillinghast, of the group Green Berkshires, which opposes wind turbines.

Others, however, see Romney's plan — announced Aug. 11 — as an opportunity for Massachusetts to take the lead in embracing alternative-energy projects.

It calls for several steps to increase efficiency, such as flexible rates that encourage customers to cut their usage during peak energy times of the day, and tax incentives to purchase fuel-efficient vehicles. It also includes incentives for companies that install their own clean power supplies and decisions on proposals to expand the state's natural gas supply.

But a major component of the plan is to increase the presence of renewable energy options such as hydropower, biofuels and wind power. Besides encouraging the completion of some projects in the works — making specific mention of the proposed Hoosac Wind project in Florida and Monroe — the plan also calls for expedited permit approvals for projects.

### 'Nonconservation lands'

It would open up some state property for such efforts — a factor that has raised concerns because of the large amount of state-owned land in the Berkshires. The state could begin seeking proposals as early as this fall.

But Nancy Nylen, associate director of the Center for Ecological Technology, which supports wind power, said her conversations with state officials suggest that they are considering limited use of state-owned property.

"They'd be looking at nonconservation lands, like the kinds of lands the state owns that are around public facilities," she said, including hospitals, prisons and public service facilities.

Nylen said it could be a positive step and put the state in the lead, provided the state kept in mind several essential elements. "Leading by example would include all the things we'd hope for: environmental standards, public input and fiscal responsibility."

### Four local projects in the works

Four significant wind energy projects are in the works in the Berkshires and could be up and running by the end of the year. Supporters say the wind turbines are an important part of lessening the nation's dependence on fossil fuels and their negative impacts on air quality and the environment. But opponents say that the towers are an aesthetic menace, dangerous to wildlife and their habitats, and more about corporate tax breaks than about protecting the environment.

Joseph Donovan, a spokesman for the state Executive Office of Economic Development, said the quicker process is needed to help commercial projects in general, which can suffer from what is now a "slow and unpredictable" process in Massachusetts.

"(The plan) has been created to take advantage of things in many cases that are already in place, so we can take action now." he said.

One example Donovan cited is legislation that Romney signed earlier this month that streamlines the commercial permitting process. The law would allow communities to select certain sites for expedited permitting, in which the process would be completed within 180 days.

He said that the plan also intends — sometime this fall — to request proposals "for wind and biomass at state facilities and on state land. It's too early to tell which sites could be categorized as the best sites."

While the state continues to find ways to encourage more wind projects, four are in various stages in the Berkshires.

In Savoy, the developers of the proposed Minuteman Wind project, which would install five turbines, met with town officials Aug. 23 to discuss zoning issues. Under current bylaws, the project would need either a special permit or a change in the law that could be put before voters at a special town meeting this fall. The developers plan to hold an informational update meeting on the project on Sept. 14 at 7 p.m. at the town fire station.

Meanwhile, other wind projects in the area are pushing to completion, including the 10-turbine Berkshire Wind project on Hancock's Brodie Mountain. Project spokesman William Sheperdson said foundation work has begun on three of the sites, and the turbines could go up late this year or early next. Much of the work has been on the access road.

"We're definitely making progress," he said. "The road is crucial to this project."

The 20-turbine Hoosac Wind project, proposed for ridge lines in Florida and Monroe, is currently awaiting a recommendation on a challenge to its permitting from the Division of Administrative Law Appeals. The magistrate's recommendation would go to the Department of Environmental Protection, which can accept or reject any part of the decision.

At Jiminy Peak Mountain Resort, work has continued on the wiring and infrastructure necessary for the single turbine Jiminy plans to put up to help meet its electricity needs. The resort anticipates the turbine will go up next July.

"Everything is on track," Jiminy spokeswoman Katie Tworek said.

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# Savoy bylaw making wind project uneasy

August 24, 2006 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Author: Shaw Israel Izikson, North Adams Transcript Section: Local 456 Words OpenURL Link

Thursday, August 24 SAVOY — A wind turbine bylaw proposal has planners of the Minuteman Wind project concerned.

The company has proposed five 420-foot wind turbines for West Hill on a 293-acre parcel owned by Diane and Harold Malloy, who run a logging operation there.

"We think that the current bylaw they (town officials) are considering is very restrictive and overly complicated. We would like to go into discussions with the Planning Board about the bylaw, and we are preparing some detailed comments," said Minuteman Wind LLC President Donald McCauley.

Planning Board member Donald Phinney said that, while McCauley has been at previous meetings, he has not explained to the board what his objections are. "Nothing really came out of the previous meetings," Phinney said. "He may find it restrictive, but that's his own opinion. He may not like what we've done so far."

McCauley would not specify why the zoning bylaw the town is considering is restrictive.

"We will be meeting with the Planning Board in early September to figure out the appropriate approach," he said. "After we've presented our comments to the board, we will explain what the issues are."

Phinney would not give a copy of the proposed bylaw to the Transcript, nor would he explain the details because, he said, "There is so much content in it."

He said the board hopes to have the bylaw approved at a special town meeting in October.

## 12.5 MW

The company intends to build a 12.5-megawatt facility to generate enough electricity annually for about 2,500 homes.

In a previous interview, McCauley said the turbines would generate 4 million megawatt hours over the course of a year. "We expect to sell the power to the wholesale power grid in New England, and we think it will be a benefit to the residents of Savoy," he said previously. He said the project was scheduled to start in 2007 but did not have any cost estimates.

The wind power company will hold an informational meeting on the project Thursday, Sept. 14, at 7 p.m. at the Savoy fire station. It is being held to respond to questions about the project that were raised by residents at a meeting in June.

"I would rather not get into the questions that were asked at this point," McCauley said. "Right now, we are heading into the permitting process on the project, and we are also preparing an environmental notification to the state."

Minuteman received a \$200,000 predevelopment loan last year from Renewable Energy Trust, a division of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative.

The Minuteman project is one of a number of wind-power projects that are in the planning stages in the Berkshire region. Others include the Hoosac Wind Power project in the town of Florida and Monroe, and the Berkshire Wind

# Power project in Hancock.

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# Despite wind debate, Searsburg facility attracts many visitors

July 22, 2006 | Bennington Banner (VT)

Author: SHAW ISRAEL IZIKSON, North Adams Transcript | Section: News | 627 Words

OpenURL Link

Saturday, July 22 SEARSBURG — Wind power farms may have their detractors, but the Searsburg Wind Power Facility is a popular destination for residents and tourists alike, drawing hundreds of visitors each year.

Now in is ninth year, the Green Mountain Power-owned facility opened for public tours Tuesday, one of seven days of the year it's open to the public.

The \$11 million project, which was completed in June 1997, consists of 11 turbines spread across 35 acres that generate an average of 12.5 million kilowatts per year.

Volunteer tour guide Walton G. Congdon, a retired physics and chemistry teacher who taught for 38 years at Northfield (Mass.) Mount Hermon School, said he has been giving tours of the facility for 10 years, because he believes in renewable energy.

First involved with solar

"When I retired, I was getting more involved with solar energy, to the point where my home is now powered by solar energy," said Congdon of Northfield. "I don't think wind farms are the definitive answer for renewable energy, but I think it's just one of the approaches we're going to need. We need to start developing a diversity of energy sources, because no one silver bullet can solve the problems behind global warming."

He said he could understand why some people are against wind farms, but that the benefits outweigh any detrimental aspects.

"I grew up in view of Mount Equinox, so I know why some people get anxious about the appearance of machines on ridge lines, and those concerns are valid," Congdon said. "But I'm also aware that research has shown that wind farms have not been a detriment to tourism. In fact, it has been an asset, and it hasn't depreciated home values."

The tour allowed visitors to walk around the facility and to climb inside one of the 24-sided tubular turbine towers, which are bolted into the ground on a 5-foot-thick rock foundation. Congdon said each one of the three turbine blades is 64 feet long and weighs two tons.

## Mind boggling

"Every time I come up here, it boggles me that six tons of blades can be pushed around by the wind to generate 550 kilowatts of electricity," he said. "Each tower is 132 feet above ground, and each blade is 64 feet long, because if it was 200 feet or above, the Federal Aviation Administration would require each blade to be lit."

Site electromechanical technician Aaron Taylor said the wind farm is weather dependent and that the weather affected each turbine differently.

"Just this February, we had one turbine that was hit by lightning, and it destroyed a blade," Taylor said. "We couldn't fix it until the end of May because of the weather. The weather is there, whether you like it or not."

Tour guide Martha Staskus, who is also vice president of Vermont Environmental Research Associates, a subcontractor for GMP, said the visitors are often surprised when seeing the wind farm in person.

"A common question people ask is 'What's the deal with the sound?' because people always think that the turbines are going to be very noisy machines, and they just aren't," Staskus said. "Everyone brings their own personal perception before they go for a tour, and usually they discover that they're wrong. I'm glad that they have opened the facility to the public."

Staskus said Portland, Ore., based PPM Energy, which also owns development rights to the Hoosac Wind project in Florida, Mass., is planning an expansion of the Searsburg wind farm onto National Forest land in Readsboro and Searsburg. The company is proposing 20 to 30 new wind turbines on up to 80 acres of Green Mountain National Forest for the Deerfield Wind Power project.

"The project right now is undergoing a a federal and state review, as well as an environmental impact study,"
Staskus said

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### Wind farm draws visitors

July 19, 2006 | North Adams Transcript (MA) Author: Shaw Israel Izikson, North Adams Transcript | Section: Local | 652 Words OpenURL Link

Wednesday, July 19 SEARSBURG, Vt. — Wind power farms may have their detractors in Berkshire County, Mass., but the Searsburg Wind Power Facility is a popular destination for residents and tourists alike, drawing hundreds of visitors each year.

Now in is ninth year, the Green Mountain Power-owned facility opened for public tours Tuesday, one of seven days of the year it's open to the public.

The \$11 million project, which was completed in June 1997, consists of 11 turbines spread across 35 acres that generate an average of 12,500,000 kilowatts per year.

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He said he could understand why some people are against wind farms but that the benefits outweigh any detrimental aspects.

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### Up-close tour

The tour allowed visitors to walk around the facility and to climb inside one of the 24-sided tubular turbine towers, which are bolted into the ground on a 5-foot thick rock foundation. Congdon said each one of the three turbine blades is 64 feet long and weighs two tons.

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