

Wind War July 07, 2010

<http://www.vermonttiger.com/content/2010/07/wind-war.html>

"The facts are merely inconvenient truths to proponents of wind technology, since they belie their claims that wind can contribute to energy independence, reduce carbon emissions, and be cost-effective. The facts also show that large-scale wind technology is actually a harmful environmental presence-- threatening land conservation, wildlife and natural heritage views. In addition to these adverse environmental impacts, industrial wind plants have enormous potential to reduce the quality of life of nearby residents and the value of nearby properties."

Friends of Glebe Mountain

Not for the first time, a wind-power developer has cast a lustful eye on Glebe Mountain, overlooking Londonderry. The last effort was turned back in 2006 when, after a long fight, local citizens voted 2:1 against industrial wind. The Londonderry and Windham town plans then incorporated language to prevent the introduction of wind farms in the area.

Still, seduced by the sweet smell of government subsidies, a German firm is making some first, tentative moves. And the citizens are, again, resisting, as [The Friends of Glebe Mountain](#), and yesterday they went on-line with a web-site. Among the organizers of this effort is our colleague, Hugh Kemper.

Friends of the Tiger – and many others around the state – will know Hugh for his comprehensive and compelling studies of education funding in Vermont. Kemper simply will not give in to sentimentality. The numbers and the facts are not to be denied.

The point to be made – and we expect Hugh and his associates will make it firmly – is that wind power is *not* a good deal by any empirical measure. Yesterday, when most of the East was in the grip of a heat wave and electricity use was high, the wind did not blow. The same is true of exceedingly cold winter days. When you most need the power, wind does not deliver.

Supporters of wind power are generally either fetishists or opportunists. They either believe that electricity generated by wind is somehow superior to other kinds or they see money to be made by taking advantage of lavish subsidies, much the way developers of small hydro sites did some 30 years ago when the PURPA gold rush

was on. Wind advocates will press their case by arguing, essentially, "what's the harm?" They talk of wind as part of the energy "portfolio," and point to how it "diversifies" our means of energy production.

Well, it also wastes scarce resources, trashes mountainsides that have a far higher value, and distorts incentives. Among other things.

We hope that, having run out their guns and unfurled their flag, Kemper and the other organizers will not be in for a long fight. We need him on the education beat. But if this does turn into a protracted struggle, the Germans are about to experience the meaning of the word "tenacity." In whatever language.