



Eco Awareness Society Newsletter

“The great enemy of the truth is very often not the lie -- deliberate, contrived and dishonest -- but the myth -- persistent, persuasive and unrealistic.”

John F. Kennedy

April 2010
No. 8



“Best Friends”
Bailey’s Brook, Nova Scotia

Four Reasons We Will Not Sign a Wind Lease Agreement

I am writing on behalf of Eileen Burkey’s and the late Willard Burkey’s farm located north of Walnut, Illinois. My great-grandparents purchased and moved to this property in the 1890s.

Since that time, my family has been devoted and faithful caretakers of this acreage. Further, we intend to continue this stewardship for future generations of our family, not just for the benefit of our family but because it is the right thing to do. We are the beneficiaries of a limited, endangered resource that should not be sacrificed.

We will not sign the Wind Project Lease Agreement for four, irrefutable reasons. First, we will not diminish our tillable acres – either by area or by productivity. To do otherwise is both short-sighted and irresponsible. A wind turbine and its access roadways would decrease our tillable acres. The productivity of the soil would be diminished by compaction and damage to the farm tile system.

Second, we will not sign a contract that provides unilateral “sole discretion” in a...limited liability corporate tenant regarding numerous matters concerning our family farm. **We are obviously in this for the long haul and will not let our property by irrevocably abused and controlled by outsiders for their financial gain.**

Third, the proposed Wind Project Lease Agreement is extremely protective of the wind turbine company, and it does not afford the farm owner the same legal protections. My professional reservations include the potential 70-year duration of the lease and its ramifications upon future generations. It is impossible to predict the financial viability of the developer or its successors for that time period, or even to gauge the reasonableness of the terms for such a time period. Also, the lease’s list of easement effects will affect the quality of life of anyone in the vicinity of the turbines;

this list includes everything from sound pollution to visual blight to air turbulence to radio-frequency interference, to name a few. I question whether the proposed payment structure is sufficient to compensate for this open-ended list. Further, the lease terms provide that a landowner cannot construct any structure anywhere on his property without first meeting with the developer in order to determine a site that will not impact the developer’s rights. **The overriding theme in the proposed lease is clearly the developer’s rights, not the rights of landowners.**

Fourth, we are very concerned about evidence showing farmland values are lowered by the existence of neighboring wind turbines. **We will not sign a contract that will detrimentally impact the farmland values of our neighbors and friends, and would hope that our neighbors and friends would have the same consideration for us.**

Ann Burkey Brezinski, March 17, 2010

Tribes Reject Millions to Halt Opposition

“With the clock ticking on the Cape Wind decision, American Indian tribes across the nation are lining up in support of the Wampanoags. The San Carlos Apache Tribe of Arizona and the 25-tribe coalition known as the United South and Eastern Tribes Inc. have both asked U.S. Interior Secretary Ken Salazar to stop the controversial project.” [1]

In an effort to halt the tribes opposition to the “wind power project slated for Nantucket Sound” [3] “...a million-dollar offer by Cape Wind Associates LLC [was made] to each of the Indian tribes fighting the proposed” project. “The offer...sources say was for \$50,000 a year for 20 years...” [2]

“Cedric Cromwell, chairman of the Mashpee Wampanoags...said the offer was rejected “out of hand.” **This issue has never been about money for us, Cromwell said.**” [3]

“Culturally speaking, the offer was never acceptable, Bettina Washington, the Aquinnah tribe’s historic preservation officer, said... **We would not consider selling our cultural landscape.**” [2]

([1]“More Tribes Join Bid to Derail Cape Wind”, Christine McConville, Boston Herald, January 26, 2010 [2]“Tribes Reject Wind Farm Offer”, Patrick Cassidy, Cape Cod Times, February 28, 2010 [3]“Tribes Reject Wind-Fall; Cape Wind CEO Offers Millions to Halt Opposition”, Christine McConville, Boston Herald, February 27, 2010)

“The love for all living creatures is the noblest attribute of man.”
Charles Darwin

Nova Scotia Government Ignores Science

The Eco Awareness Society (EAS) mailed copies of “The Wind Farm Scam” by Dr. John Etherington to Premier Darrell Dexter, Minister of Health Maureen MacDonald, Minister of Natural Resources John MacDonell, Minister of Energy Bill Estabrooks, Minister of Environment Sterling Belliveau and Minister of Economic & Rural Development Percy Paris.

In “The Wind Farm Scam”, Dr. Etherington argues that **“wind power is by nature intermittent and cannot generate a steady output, necessitating back-up coal and gas power plants that significantly negate the saving of greenhouse gas emissions (CO2).** In addition to the inefficiency of wind power there are ecological drawbacks, including damage to habitats, wildlife and the...assault upon natural beauty...”

EAS received responses to the book from the Hon. Percy Paris, Hon. Sterling Belliveau and Premier Darrell Dexter through the Minister of Energy the Hon. Bill Estabrooks. All the responses stated, “Nova Scotia has made a significant commitment to the development of renewable energy both to reduce the Province’s dependence on fossil fuels and to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases [CO2] from electricity production.” [1]

This “commitment” was established in Bill C.146, the *Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act*. While this Act recognizes the interconnection between the economy, the health of the environment and the health of Nova Scotians, (4)(g) of this act assumes that renewable energy, particularly in the form of wind power, will substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions (CO2). Bill C.146 is essentially a set of targets, (4)(g) however, poses a solution rather than a challenge to seriously research how to meet those targets.

If communities and families are to be saddled with the collateral damage of industrial wind power plants than shouldn’t there be some greater good? Germany has over 20,000 industrial wind turbines and is still building new coal fired power plants. In a meeting of the Danish Wind Energy Association with the Danish government, Elsam, the Jutland power generator stated, **“that increasing wind power does not decrease CO2 emissions.”**

The government of Nova Scotia is wedded to a false belief and refuses to acknowledge the facts about commercial wind development as presented in hundreds of papers by scientists, engineers and climatologists around the world. **Even U.S. Energy Secretary Stephen Chu stated at the recent Copenhagen Climate Change Conference “that today’s wind energy technology simply isn’t good enough, if wind power is to have any impact on CO2 emissions.”**

If there is no significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (CO2), then the provincial government is forcing

families and communities to sacrifice their health, quality of life and property values so that corporate interests can make a profit off the backs of rural Nova Scotians.

[1] Hon. Bill Estabrooks, in a letter dated January 5, 2010

It’s Not a Farm

I am curious: why do we call a pasture filled with giant industrial wind turbines a farm? Farms by definition are tracts of land dedicated to a cultivated crop or where animals are raised. I have searched numerous dictionaries and have found no reference to a wind farm.

Let us be honest, what we are witnessing are industries’ use of the land and the wind to generate electricity...Let us call those industrial sites actually what they are. They are electric wind generating sites...Some folks might argue the use of the word “farm” stems from the harvest of the wind. This is a stretch [unless] you would consider calling an oil field an oil farm.

Fred Eiserman, Casper Wyoming, March 11, 2010

Wind Farms Causing Turmoil

Ontario – Nicholas Schaut of Meaford says he was so stressed from years of living near a Shelburne wind farm that he can’t stay long on return visits to his former home. He’s saddened to see that once happy community disrupted as wind farms pit neighbour against neighbour...

“This kind of industrial development is ripping communities apart,” Schaut told hundreds of people who filled the main hall of Centre Wellington District High School...If they allow Chicago’s Invenergy LLC to construct 25 to 35 wind turbines...“I believe you will regret it,” he warned. “Turbines,” Schaut stressed, “do not make good neighbours.”

Keynote speaker Carmen Krogh said...what’s known to date, is turbines cause low-frequency noise...that’s particularly disturbing to people. “It’s very disruptive. The body is not tolerating this type of noise very well...”

Ripley, Ont. Dairy farmer David Colling, who has a background in electrical engineering, told the audience there is increasing health concern about “dirty electricity” from the electromagnetic waves produced by turbines. Nearby residents, he said, develop “electrohypersensitivity” and eventually have to move away. “This is like a peanut allergy—once you get it, you have it for life.”

“(We need) to thoroughly evaluate the impact this could have on the community,” spokesperson Laura Humphrey of Belwood said...She feared the proposal for up to 35 turbines will grow over time to a much larger development. The Shelburne site, she noted, started with 25 turbines and now has 133.

(Excerpt from “Wind Farms Causing Turmoil, Meeting Hears”, Vik Kirsch, Guelph Mercury, March 25, 2010)

Digby Residents Meet With Energy Minister

On Tuesday March 9th, four representatives from Digby Neck traveled to Halifax to meet with NS Energy Minister, Bill Estabrooks. The purpose of the meeting was to impress on Minister Estabrooks the impact the renewable energy policy has on our rural communities.

Present at the meeting from the Energy Department, in addition to Minister Estabrooks, were Scott McCoombs (Director, Energy Markets) and Matt Lumley (Department Spokesperson). Our MLA, Harold (Junior) Theriault also attended accompanied by a researcher from the Liberal Caucus.

After briefing the Minister on the location of the proposed Digby Wind Power Project in relation to our homes and communities, we described some of the negative impacts the project has had, and is likely to have, on our Digby Neck communities.

These concerns include division in the community between those offered money, who are currently supporting the project, and community members who are “non-participants” concerned about negative effects on their quality of life, including health. We anticipate many health effects resulting from an insufficient separation distance between turbines and homes. **All 20 proposed turbines are within the 2.4 km minimum distance we believe is necessary in order to prevent any health impacts on any member of our small communities.**

Minister Estabrooks asked how turbine setbacks are established. In our case, in the absence of municipal regulations, turbine setbacks were established through the provincial environmental assessment process. We explained that NS Environment approved turbine sites where noise estimates do not exceed 45 dB(A) outside the home.

When we mentioned that project owner Emera Inc hopes to hire an independent acoustician to do an independent noise study for the project, Minister Estabrooks marveled at the word “acoustician” and wrote it down. Asked what subject it was that he had taught during his career, he said history.

Our MLA joined us in calling for a province-wide plan for siting industrial wind generating facilities. Noting the large brightly-coloured Wind Resource Map on the lobby wall, we suggested they develop a similar map showing areas of “good wind, where people don’t live”.

After the meeting, Scott McCoombs explained to one of our group that Nova Scotia Power would be achieving about half of their near-term GHG reduction goal through wind energy development.

McCoombs offered that the areas of best wind are in the coastal areas of NS, “where people like to come to live”. It was pointed out that people have been living in these communities for generations.

Judith Peach, March 28, 2010

Guest Writer, Judith Peach is a member of “Concerned Residents of Rossway, Gulliver’s Cove and Waterford” in Digby, Nova Scotia. She is also a member of the Eco Awareness Society.

Digby Neck is a unique geographical feature that exists nowhere else in the world. It is considered to be one of Nova Scotia’s most spectacular natural regions with a rich ecosystem. The area is famous for its whale and seabird watching tours as well as its striking panoramas. The Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage responded to the Digby Wind Power Project’s Environmental Assessment stating, that the area has “an extensive history and natural beauty which gives it tourism appeal,” and expressed concern that no “consideration [was] given to the potential issues” that their department had raised about this project.



Porcupine

The porcupine is Canada’s second-largest rodent. A porcupine’s Latin name means “quill pig”. Because porcupines are slow-moving and short-sighted they rely on sharp hearing and a keen sense of smell. Their love of salt and the need to hone their teeth regularly will often lead the porcupine to gnaw anything with salty sweat on it, such as canoe paddles, axe handles and saddles or other leather. Their fondness for salt also leads them to roadways where salt has been sprinkled to melt ice. These characteristics; slow-moving, short-sighted and fondness for salt has led to cars and trucks being the number one killer of porcupines.

The head, neck and rump of a porcupine is protected by quills. The tip of each quill is covered by several dozen small black barbs that swell when embedded in flesh. The porcupine does not shoot its quills at enemies. Their first line of defense is to retreat to the nearest shelter, under a rock or log or up a tree. However, if it cannot retreat it will raise its quills and turn its back to the enemy, protecting its head. It then stomps its back feet and lashes its tail threateningly. The quills are loosely attached and the momentum of the tail can send quills flying through the air, giving the impression that they are thrown.

Amazingly, porcupine quills are naturally antiseptic. While they can do damage embedded in a victim, they rarely fester. This characteristic is for survival purposes as porcupines do impale themselves on occasion. They are quite adept at removing quills from themselves. The quills are

hollow and air-filled which helps keep the porcupine afloat, making them excellent swimmers.

A porcupine produces one offspring a year. The baby porcupine's eyes are open and incisor teeth and molars are already exposed at birth. When born it is covered in dense black hair with the sharp quills concealed in the hair. Within hours of birth the quills harden. After only a few days the baby can climb. Baby porcupines are quite playful and will shadowbox using their tails.

Primarily nocturnal, porcupines are active all year. They spend much of their time in tall trees eating the bark and branches. They sleep during the day in a hollow log, in a den under some rocks or high up in a tree. When sitting hunched in a tree, a porcupine is often mistaken for the nest of a squirrel or a crow.

Wind Power's Secret: It Has a Carbon Footprint

Portland, Oregon – In ten years Oregon has handed out \$1.3 billion in tax credits for renewable energy and conservation projects like wind power, but questions about why the state is spending so much on something that may have a hidden environmental drawback have been raised by some.

While wind power is touted as the cleanest and greenest renewable energy resource, Todd Wynn of the Cascade Policy Institute says it's not as clean as advocates claim. He says it's simply because the wind doesn't blow all the time.

There has to be a backup source to power generated by wind at all times to ensure electricity flows to customers without interruption. **The more wind power put on line, the more backup power is needed,** and often it's coal or natural gas... Wynn says a Bonneville Power Administration staffer admitted to his think tank that **wind does not reduce carbon emissions, but instead, creates them.**

That's because when wind blows, the dam – or fossil fuel – backs up. It doesn't shut down... It's like a car stopped at a red light: The engine is still running, and just like the car, this "spinning reserve mode" as it's called, consumes energy...

With three times more wind power expected to flow down power lines within three years, the carbon footprint of using wind power may increase. "Natural gas is probably the next best backup to hydro because those facilities can ramp up and down very quickly... **Which would [in fact, be] that they're creating fossil fuel plants because they're**

putting wind energy on the grid," said Wynn.

(Excerpt from "Wind Power's Dirty Secret: It Has a Carbon Footprint"

Anita Kisee, KATU News, March 12, 2010)

Nova Scotia Power Accuses Shear Wind of Double Billing

NS Power Inc. has agreed to cover the network upgrades that will allow Shear Wind's 60 megawatt Glen Dhu wind project to connect to the power grid. However, the utility has accused Shear Wind of trying to recover the money twice from ratepayers in an effort to make the project more financially viable.

In a letter to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board, NSPI regulatory counsel Nicole Godbout says Shear Wind built the cost of a three-breaker ring bus into its power purchase agreement (PPA) with NSPI. Now, the utility alleges that Shear Wind wants the costs of the three-breaker ring bus reimbursed, without adjusting what it is charging NSPI for power... NSPI has asked that it not be required to reimburse Shear Wind.

"It is very telling, in light of all of the evidence... that Shear Wind is not proposing a reduced energy rate in exchange for its request for a refund of the network upgrade costs that it included in its PPA bid price," said Godbout.

"The board should find it unacceptable that Shear Wind is trying to 'improve' the feasibility of its project by making NSPI customers pay twice for the same project costs."

Mike Magnus, CEO of Shear Wind, said he had no comment while the matter was before the [Utility and Review] board.

(Excerpt from "NS Power Accuses Shear Wind of Double Billing",

Gillian Cormier, AllNovaScotia.com, March 12, 2010)

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EAS newsletter is published monthly by the Eco Awareness Society and distributed free of charge. All work is done on a volunteer basis. Membership is \$10. yearly. If you would like to become a member or for more information on EAS, please contact any of the following members:

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The Eco Awareness Society is a non-profit organization whose mission is to uphold these principles: that "a subset of society should not be forced to bear the cost of a benefit for the larger society", that a landowner's right to full use and enjoyment of their property be upheld and not taken or hindered for public or private use or development, without just compensation, and that any policy or development with regard to the environment and landscape of Nova Scotia be shown to be effective and based on the principals of environmental sustainability and stewardship of our precious resources.*

*Based on the *Canadian Charter of Rights* and the *Fifth Amendment, U.S. Constitution*