



Eco Awareness Society Newsletter

“In a time of universal deceit, telling the truth becomes a revolutionary act.”

George Orwell

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No. 12

Eco Awareness Society Website

Bailey's Brook - The Eco Awareness Society now has a website - www.ecoawarenesssociety.ca.

Each week we will be adding new information to the website including a community page.

Recent EAS News

Halifax - The feature article in the August 5th issue of The Coast focuses on Shear Wind's Glen Dhu project and also looks at the ineffectiveness of industrial wind power plants in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

This excellent article by Bruce Wark, titled “Blow Job” can be found at www.thecoast.ca.

EAS Investigates Shear Wind Development Permits

Bailey's Brook - On June 23rd the Eastern District Planning Commission (EDPC) granted Shear Wind Inc. development permits for 14 turbines to be erected in Antigonish County.

A month earlier, on May 13th 2010, the Eco Awareness Society submitted to EDPC a nine page critique of Shear Wind's noise study which Shear Wind provided as evidence that their project would meet all provisions of the Antigonish County Wind bylaw. The EAS analysis cited 9 points of deficiency in the study and concluded that not only had Shear Wind failed to prove that their project would comply with the Counties bylaw, but that based on noise measurements conducted by HGC Engineering at Point Pubnico Wind Farm, the Glen Dhu project noise levels would most likely fail the bylaw.

In an email to EAS, the development officer explained that he granted the permits based on the results of a second noise study commissioned by Shear Wind with Helimax of Quebec.

EAS is currently reviewing Helimax's noise study. If, after reviewing this second report, EAS determines that the original points of deficiency have not been addressed, EAS believes it will have sufficient technical grounds to apply to the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia to quash the development officer's decision. To be clear, this action will not delay the construction of the wind turbines in question. However, in the event the Supreme Court rules in EAS's



Eco Awareness Society Launches “Save Our Mountain” Campaign

Bailey's Brook - The Eco Awareness Society has launched the “Save Our Mountain” campaign with the raffle of a beautiful painting donated by local artist Cathy Leeming.

Save Our Mountain's purpose is to raise funds to save this special part of Nova Scotia from a project for which no greenhouse gas reductions have been substantiated.

We are keenly aware of the need for effective solutions to climate change however, recent scientific reports from established institutions in Denmark, Germany and Spain have shown little to no reduction in greenhouse gas emissions or fossil fuel use despite major wind installations in all three countries.

The Eco Awareness Society's policy has always been to promote awareness and understanding of ecological and energy principles through scientific evidence. We are fighting for reason and scientific evidence to prevail over wind industry marketing, so that legitimate solutions, which will make a lasting difference to our urgent climate change and energy issues, will be implemented by the government of Nova Scotia.

Raffle tickets are \$2.00 each or 3 for \$5.00. The drawing will be held on CKEC radio on September 30th, 2010.

Upcoming dates to purchase tickets:

- August 14th - Antigonish Farmers Market 8-12
- August 19th - Sobeys, Aberdeen Mall 1-4
- August 21st - New Glasgow Farmers Market 8:30-12
- August 28th - Highland Square Mall 1-4

favour, any turbines erected under those permits would have to be removed.

Wind Industry in Trouble Worldwide

Industrial wind power has not turned out to be the saviour of climate change and governments all over the world are backing away – including Canada.

Spain, a country frequently held up as a model on wind energy, “agreed [this July]...to cut subsidies which have made the country the leading producer of wind...but [have] saddled utilities with billions of euros of debt, the Industry Ministry said.” [1]

“A change in **Italy’s** public incentives for renewable-energy investment has brought financing for the sector to a halt, hitting aspiring players in the green economy...Moreover, new financing for renewable-energy projects has been “totally blocked”, said Alberto Malogodi, chief executive of Veronager, which invests in wind farms.” [2]

Last year in **Denmark**, “Venstre, the governing party in the Danish parliament, announced that it would be phasing out [the] subsidy for onshore wind power in order to concentrate on other renewables such as biogas and solar. In a press statement...Lars Christian Lilleholt, energy and environment spokesman for Venstre pointed out the very heavy [financial] burden now placed on consumers to support wind power...” [3]

While in **Canada**, the federal government decided not to extend its “production incentive for wind energy producers...Canada’s ecoEnergy program has now allocated all of its funding and is supporting no wind energy projects built after March 2011.” [4] In fact, **Shear Wind Inc. stated that their “internal drop-dead” date for the Glen Dhu project is March 31** – the deadline for qualifying for the federal government’s ecoEnergy rebate program.” [5]

Meanwhile, in the **United States**, top wind industry executives attending the American Wind Energy Association conference in May, 2010 were pessimistic about the future of their industry. “Michael O’Sullivan of NextEra Energy, Iowa’s second-largest producer of wind power, told the ... [conference]: **Our product is too expensive relative to other options...**” Indeed, “the sudden rise of [inexpensive] natural gas is credited with throwing [the] wind” industry into a tailspin. “Environmentalists generally have given natural gas their highest marks among the fossil fuels. It emits between 50 percent and 70 percent fewer greenhouse gas emissions than coal.” **While natural gas is not considered a sustainable solution, U.S. Energy Secretary Steven Chu sees it as a transition fuel while his government searches for a “sustainable solution to global warming, air pollution and resource depletion.”** [6]

“Presenters at the American Wind Energy Association’s... Conference...seemed anxious that their industry would not grow without...financial incentives and a national renewable

electricity standard (RES)...” [7] “We are in a critical spot right now, said Elizabeth Salerno, director of industry data and analysis for the association. It’s sort of a do-or-die moment for the industry.” [8]

It may be a die moment for the wind industry as Senate Democrats in July conceded an energy defeat and “ditched a plan to cap greenhouse gas emissions, instead [laying] out plans for a narrow bill that would address the Gulf oil spill [and] include some energy efficiency measures. Also dropped from the bill...was [the] renewable electricity mandate (RES) sought by the wind-power industry.” [9]

Even billionaire T. Boone Pickens, who had plans to carpet the U.S. with thousands of wind turbines has dropped those plans. “Pickens may be lots of things but he’s always been a shrewd businessman and a ruthless opportunist. It’s interesting to note that on the same day he dropped wind from the Pickens Plan and beefed up his support for natural gas, word came down from on high that a Pickens-backed provision [on natural gas] had made its way into the Senate energy bill.” [10]

And what is happening with our local wind development? In a July 29th article on All Nova Scotia, **Shear Wind states that they have “informed investors [that] it does not now expect to meet a management target to get all of its Glen Dhu production up and running by the year-end.”**[11]

In fact in Shear Wind’s Management Discussion and Analysis (MD&A) released July 27, 2010, it states “the current uncertainty in financial markets which include required increases in lending margins in the debt markets as well as increases in foreign currency exchange rates have presented challenges to the Company.” If further states, “**There is no certainty that any one prospective project will be realized.**”

Under “Risks and Uncertainties” the MD&A states, “The profitability of the Company’s wind energy projects will be in part dependent upon the continuation of a favorable regulatory climate with respect to the continuing operations and the future growth and development of the independent power industry. Government regulations and incentives currently have a favorable impact on the building of wind power facilities **but should they be modified, operations of the company could be adversely affected.**” [12]

And as we are now seeing, that favourable climate is already changing with government policies being modified worldwide. As Reuben Burge, president of RMSenergy of New Glasgow said when the federal government allowed the ecoEnergy program to die, “When the government isn’t behind [wind], it lacks confidence for lenders...” [4] According to Shear Wind’s MD&A, “**If the Company cannot obtain sufficient funds, it may not be able to fund future operations...and ultimately continue in business.**” [12]

See www.ecoawarenesssociety.ca for the footnotes to this article.

Can You Spot the Real Farm?



Gold Farm



Gas Farm



Wind Farm - Quebec, Canada



Farm

The wind industry insists on calling their projects “farms”. They also insist on calling industrial wind turbines “windmills”. These two terms are an industry marketing tactic in an effort to deceive and draw on nostalgic images for something that stands over 40 stories tall, with blades that sweep up to 2 acres of air space and blade tips that exceed 300 kilometres per hour.

An expert hired by the government of Nova Scotia “called for wind farms to be capped at 60 megawatts...[to] limit the impact on the landscape...” Mike Magnus, ceo of Shear Wind Inc. responded by stating “**wind farms require concentration. Farming wind is no different than mining gold or mining gas...**” [1]

Given the environmental destruction of a gold mine and a gas mine, this is an interesting comparison Mr. Magnus makes to his Glen Dhu project.

It’s time we decided what image we want to live with, before the irreversible consequences of industrial wind power are all we have left of our beautiful area.

[1] “Keeping Wind Small”, Gillian Cormier, AllNovaScotia, November 23, 2009

Misunderstandings and Reality in the Wind Industry

The only reason that Nova Scotia should be rushing into the construction of any industrial wind power project is to reduce the burning of fossil fuels that create greenhouse gases.

While industrial wind power plants have political appeal and government support in Nova Scotia, neither government nor any wind industry proponent has provided independent, scientific, peer-reviewed, objective, comprehensive proof that wind power will reduce greenhouse gases.

We currently have a double standard in this regard in Nova Scotia. At the recent Utility & Review Board hearing on the proposed NewPage Port Hawkesbury biomass project, stakeholders successfully argued that the ruling be put on hold until “a full and proper comparison” of biomass is made to “available alternatives.” [1] “Our point, quite simply, is that it is necessary to compare and value risk among the available alternatives, particularly where major new construction, complex contracts, and extremely long durations are involved. All three are the case here.” [1]

All three are also the case in industrial wind power plants, yet no “full and proper comparison” has been made, and no critical thinking has been applied to industrial wind power by the government of Nova Scotia. Since government, businessmen and those that would profit are proposing that wind power is a partial solution to global warming, **then they should be required to prove wind power’s efficacy before we accept it as a legitimate solution?**

“Charles Cirtwill, president of the Atlantic Institute for Market Studies” responded to the recent “drop of millions in offshore [gas] revenue” by stating, “it’s about time the government realized it has to be careful with offshore revenues. These are the kind of artificial crises that we create for ourselves when government goes around picking winners and losers and saying things like, ‘The offshore is going to be the saviour of Nova Scotia.’ Or, what we’re saying today, ‘Renewables are going to be the saviour of Nova Scotia.’ When you pick an industry and you put all your bets on that industry, this is the kind of angst that you create for yourself. **It’s unrealistic, it’s unnecessary, and it’s not how a real economy functions.**” [2]

We should not be moving forward on any wind project until a thorough and critical examination of all the facts is undertaken. Otherwise, we may be sacrificing the unique and irreplaceable landscape of Nova Scotia along with the possibility of an economic future for rural Nova Scotians based on that unique and irreplaceable landscape.

Once the environmental damage has been done, it’s gone for good, and we will not be able to recover what we have lost.

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A brief look at some of the misunderstandings driving industrial wind power plants:

**Misunderstanding** – We need more energy.

**Reality** – In December of last year, Nova Scotia Power predicted that “the demand for electricity will drop... due to declining business activity and energy-efficiency measures... The company says it expects demand for power will drop by 1.5 per cent each year for the next decade.” [3]

They further stated that “None of the eight coal-fired plants are expected to close. However the power company intends to burn less coal by replacing 10 per cent with waste wood, or biomass.” [3]

**Misunderstanding** – Wind turbines reduce greenhouse gas emissions from coal burning power plants.

**Reality** – “Wind turbines generate electricity only when the wind blows. Since nobody knows when the wind will blow, coal burning power plants must ALWAYS be kept running to meet base load electric demand. Coal plants cannot be shut down because electricity generated by wind turbines is chronically undependable. As a result there is virtually no reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.” [4]

**Misunderstanding** - Power bills will go down because wind power is free.

**Reality** - On November 30th, 2009 it was announced that Nova Scotia Power had “been given the green light to proceed with the \$120 million, 45 megawatt Nuttby Mountain wind project.” It was stated in the release that “**the cost of the project will be recovered through power rates.**” [5]

Currently, Nova Scotia Power is before the Utility & Review Board (UARB) asking “the board to approve the acquisition, construction and interconnection costs associated with the 30 megawatt Digby Wind Project.” Nova Scotia Power is “buying the project from Emera **so the costs of the project can be recovered from ratepayers.**” [6]

[1] “Biomass Must Compete With Other Projects”, Gillian Cormier, AllNovaScotia.com, July 30, 2010

[2] “Not Much Gas Left in the Tank”, David Jackson, The Chronicle Herald, August 9, 2010

[3] “Economy, Conservation to Drive Down Energy Demand”, CBC News, December 1, 2009

[4] “Who’s Making Up Facts?”, Jack Buchan, Daily American, March 16, 2010

[5] “Nuttby Approved”, Gillian Cormier, AllNovaScotia.com, November 30, 2009

[6] “NSPI Applies to Acquire Digby Wind Project from Emera”, Gillian Cormier, July 28, 2010

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“Faith in the redemptive power of wind energy is not a substitute for analysis of its actual record.”

Eric Rosenbloom, Vermont

Green Giant Runs Amok in Ontario

Ontario - Living in Ontario these days under the reign of Premier Dalton McGuinty is like being held hostage by the Green Giant. Only this time, he's not jolly. He's just nuts.

The advantage for the rest of Canada is Ontario has literally become a "hothouse" of all things "green" imposed by governments, ostensibly to help the environment, that don't actually work. Or rather, that work not to clean up the planet, but to separate hapless taxpayers from an ever-increasing amount of the "green" in their wallets.

Indeed, a good rule of (green) thumb for Canadians is if Ontario is doing something to "help the environment," you should run screaming from the idea as if Frankenstein had suddenly been unleashed on your community.

Should you one day catch any of your politicians starting to babble like our premier does about all things green, the appropriate response would be to hunt them down with pitch forks and burning torches, before they do something really stupid. In Ontario, alas, it's too late. Stupid already rules.

In the latest fiasco, the environment minister temporarily suspended thousands of new "eco fees" the government introduced in July on everyday household products, without telling anyone. The new charges caused so much outrage, McGuinty announced...he's called the whole thing off for 90 days while his government retools the idea.

Unfortunately, we'll be paying the \$4 to \$5 million the eco fees would have generated during that period through our taxes, until McGuinty comes up with a new fiasco. Eco fees are supposed to pay for recycling, although we have no way of knowing whether they are, or, if they are, whether we're getting value for money.

Shortly before that mess, McGuinty caused an uproar in rural Ontario by suddenly cutting the ridiculous 80.2 cents per-kilowatt-hour subsidy we now pay for electricity generated by small-scale producers (ridiculous because the normal cost of generating power in Ontario is about 5 cents per kilowatt hour) to 58.8 cents per kilowatt hour, going forward.

This because the government said it can no longer afford the higher rate, although in reality, we can't afford the lower one, either...

The big problem is McGuinty has been offering a financial bonanza to industrial wind turbine developers by giving them heavily subsidized, 20-year power-generation contracts (wind energy isn't viable without massive subsidies), one factor contributing to our skyrocketing electricity bills, expected to rise 25% by the end of next year.

All this for unreliable energy that must be backed up by traditional power sources.

McGuinty's also a big booster of putting a price on carbon and establishing a North American cap-and-trade market in

carbon dioxide emissions, which has done nothing to lower emissions in Europe, has sent electricity prices there skyrocketing and which is beset by multibillion-dollar frauds.

Now a day barely passes where McGuinty, who didn't know the difference between air pollution and greenhouse gases when he won power in 2003, isn't pursuing some new "green" initiative that won't help the planet, but will separate us from more of our green.

It's too late for Ontario. We let our Jolly Green Giant get out of control and now he's running amok.

But you can still save yourselves.

("Green Giant Runs Amok in Ontario",
Lorrie Goldstein, QMI Agency, Toronto Sun, July 21, 2010)

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**Teacher:** Harold, what do you call a person who keeps on talking when people are no longer interested?

**Harold:** A teacher

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Wind Power Bandwagon Hits Bumps in the Road

Maine – The Wind Energy Act of 2008, which gave developers a fast tract to putting up wind turbines in some of the state's treasured high ground, was a special interest bill justified at the time in the name of jobs, energy independence and climate change.

"There is tremendous potential for Maine to become a leader in clean, renewable energy, including wind energy," said Governor John Baldacci, who appointed the task force whose report led to the bill...

But now, two years after the law was championed by Baldacci, some members of the task force are questioning whether the goals they set for wind power can or even should be achieved.

Critics and even some one-time supporters say the proponents of the law were swept up in a tidal wave of enthusiasm for a technology that turns out to require significant sacrifice from the state, but has little to offer Maine in return.

That issue was faced head-on recently when the state Land Use Regulation Commission (LURC) was asked to rule on a TransCanada wind project in western Maine. LURC Commissioner Ed Laverty summed up the problem with the bill: "Our job is to protect the resources in these high mountain areas...given the fragile nature, and the rich nature of the resources in these areas, we have to ask ourselves, to what extent can these benefits really outweigh the long-term costs?"

Chris O'Neil, a former state legislator who now works as a public affairs consultant to groups opposing wind power development in Maine's mountains, said that the Gover-

nor's vision was fundamentally flawed. **“To fulfill the charge of making Maine a leader in wind power development and to simultaneously protect Maine's quality of place is impossible,” O'Neil said.**

(“Wind Power Bandwagon Hits Bumps in the Road”,
Naomi Schalit, Senior Reporter, Maine Center for Public Interest,
August 6, 2010)

Epidemiologist: Evidence Concludes Wind Turbines Cause Serious Health Problems

Wisconsin – Carl V. Phillips, MPP PhD, is “an expert in epidemiology and related health sciences, as well as scientific epistemology and methodology.” He was “retained by attorney Edward Marion [to represent] Brown County Citizens for Responsible Wind Energy, [and] to provide analysis and testimony in connection [with the] Public Service Commission of Wisconsin's...Wind Siting Rules.”

Following is a summary of his main conclusions as an expert opinion before the court of Wisconsin regarding the health effects of wind turbines:

“There is ample scientific evidence to conclude that wind turbines cause serious health problems for some people living nearby. Some of the most compelling evidence in support of this has been somewhat overlooked in previous analyses, including that the existing evidence fits what is known as the case-crossover study design, one of the most useful studies in epidemiology, and the revealed preference (observed behavior) data of people leaving their homes, etc., which provides objective measures of what would otherwise be subjective phenomena...”

“The reported health effects, including insomnia, loss of concentration, anxiety, and general psychological distress are as real as physical ailments, and are part of accepted modern definitions of individual and public health. While such ailments are sometimes more difficult to study, they probably account for more of the total burden of morbidity in Western countries than do strictly physical diseases...”

“The reports that claim that there is no evidence of health effects are based on a very simplistic understanding of epidemiology and self-serving definitions of what does not count as evidence. Though those reports probably seem convincing prima facie, they do not represent proper scientific reasoning, and in some cases the conclusions of those reports do not even match their own analysis.”

(Quotes from “An Analysis of the Epidemiology and Related Evi-

dence on the Health Effects of Wind Turbines on Local Residents”,

Carl V. Phillips, MPP PhD, Public Service Commission of Wisconsin Ref#: 134274, July 3, 2010)

Expert Warns of Turbines' Effect on 'Soundscape'

New York – A sound expert told the Wind Advisory Committee that “rural soundscapes” will be changed with the construction of wind turbines and that it would be foolish to take any wind developer's sound level plan as gospel.

Clifford P. Schneider, Cape Vincent, who retired from the state Department of Environmental Conservation's Fish and Wildlife Division, told the committee that he became interested in measuring wind turbine sound in 2006, after he was appointed to Cape Vincent's Town Council...Mr. Schneider said, he was not satisfied with the initial sound study performed by commercial wind developer AES-Acciona Energy...

He said the wind developer did only a few sound readings at noisy locations at the noisiest times of the day. Mr. Schneider did a “mobile survey” of the entire town of Cape Vincent. He said he found that the developer's findings were limited and neglected to consider nighttime, worst-case wind conditions and noise impacts.

Mr. Schneider described [the town's] evenings as calm, quiet times during which the noise from turbines would not be masked. The result, he said, would be turbine noise that is “very noticeable...”

Besides his “systematic sampling” advice, **Mr. Schneider suggested building a strong compliance survey and complaint resolution and property value assurance plan into the town wind law...**

(Excerpt from “Expert Warns of Turbines' Effect on 'Soundscape'”,

Matt Mcallister, Watertown Daily Times, May 26, 2010)

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I couldn't quite remember how to throw a boomerang, but eventually it came back to me.

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EAS newsletter is published monthly by the Eco Awareness Society. 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 go to our website at: www.ecoawarenesssociety.ca

Or contact us at 902-926-2297 or info@ecoawarenesssociety.ca

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*