

'Strongly opposed to wind farm project'

Dear Editor:

I've always heard that there's no such thing as a free lunch, but I didn't know there would come a point when we'd be taxed for breathing. Because of the HUGE federal and state tax subsidies that wind companies enjoy, that's what it could feel like if the proposed Beech Ridge Wind Farm comes to pass. Through various state and federal tax subsidies, we, the American taxpayers, are subsidizing the development of wind farms, whether we want them on our mountains or in our county or not.

My family has been in the Williamsburg area for 10 generations, and I'm a lifelong citizen of Greenbrier County. I am **STRONGLY OPPOSED** to this project as I believe it would devastate parts of Cold Knob, Nunley Mountain, Beech Ridge, Big Ridge, Old Field, Shellbank Ridge, Rockcamp Ridge, and Ellis Knob and will affect some of the most beautiful mountain areas in Greenbrier and Nicholas counties.

I have read several studies regarding "windmill farms" and find the following. These turbines kill birds and bats by the thousands. According to one study, the noise created by these machines can be heard up to 3 miles from the site of the turbine. Four to six acres of land must be CLEAR-CUT to place ONE TURBINE. There have been many reported fires associated with these metal monsters. According to another study, the wind turbines DO NOT contribute to overall energy supplies and are actually the MOST EXPENSIVE form of energy produced in terms of cost per kilowatt hour. Because of the lack of efficiency (wind doesn't blow at the right speed at the right time), these turbines require a "back-up" energy source in order to meet the demand for electricity. When the wind blows in excess of 55

mph, the turbines actually shut themselves off so as not to cause damage to the blades. Blade icing is a problem, as are lightning strikes and strobe effects.

Hunting and fishing are extremely important in Greenbrier County. We are second in terms of the number of bear killed, 4th in terms of the number of deer killed (using all weapons), and we lead the state in the number of wild tur-

keys killed during the Spring and Fall turkey seasons. In West Virginia, hunters spend **1.2 BILLION DOLLARS** annually on hunting and fishing licenses alone. This does not take into account the monies generated from gas, food, lodging, and other hunting supplies. More than 400,000 hunters flock to West Virginia during the respective hunting seasons, and the negative economic impact from this industrial wind operation, just from that aspect alone, will be huge.

As president of the Williamsburg Community Action, president of the Williamsburg Area Emergency Response Team, treasurer and EMT with the Williamsburg Rescue Squad, and vice president of the Williamsburg Community Arts Council, I have a vested interest in seeing this project defeated. Locally, our Bear Dinner and Ramp Dinner will be affected if access to the mountains is denied or if the bear and ramp habitats are destroyed. Mountain cemeteries, potentially including the grave of Nancy Hart, decorated Confederate Civil War spy, will be affected due to close proximity to turbine sites. Our view-shed will be destroyed. Interference with Greenbrier County's EMS/fire radio transmission is also a consideration, as radios currently are required to operate at a lower frequency due to the close proximity of the National Radio Observatory in Pocahontas County. How can

400 foot wind towers, standing on ridge tops of 4,000 feet or greater NOT interfere with the fire/EMS transmission towers transmitting off of Keeney's Knob and Muddy Creek Mountain? After all, the fire/EMS towers are only 1,202 feet and 880 feet respectively.

Now that Invenergy, the company advancing this proposal, has filed its application with the WV Public Service Commission, I would encourage everyone reading this to write a letter protesting the development of this project.

Send it to: WV Public Service Commission, 201 Brooks St., P.O. Box 812, Charleston, WV 25323 and reference PSC case number: 05-1590-E-CN.

If we don't stand together on this, our entire way of life could be gone *with the wind*.

Debbie Sizemore
Williamsburg