

From: Carlyn Moulton  
Sent: Tuesday, September 07, 2010 4:08 PM  
To: Adam Radwanski  
Subject: ill wind blowing

First, let me thank you for your article in the Globe today...one of the most important pieces to appear in your paper to date.

I have written a letter to the editor focused on the more substantive issue of McGuinty's admission that he hadn't given these issues much thought. But I did want to respond to the characterization of Prince Edward County as a hotbed for Nimbyism - even if the characterization is attributed to McGuinty.

I would welcome the chance - as would many of my colleagues here in the County - to spend a little time either in person or by email outlining what our objections to IWTs here are, and why we don't think these are merely NIMBY objections.

We established a working research group of electrical engineers, business owners, physicians, journalists and researchers. Collectively, we have put thousands of hours of research into this issue. In the course of doing so we have learned a great deal about the experience of people in other places, and my assessment of the implications of their experience, applied to our own context, forced me to draw some conclusions.

If I might briefly summarize some of the reasons for my objections, they are as follows:

1. The area from Brighton to Wolfe Island - which includes Prince Edward County - is one of the largest migratory paths for birds within North America. The Wolfe Island site has now been proven - even with data drawn from outside migration season - to have the highest rates of bird kills of any turbine site in North America. The numbers are twelve times what were predicted by the IWT proponents. A line of turbines along the south shore of Lake Ontario, plus a line along the north shore, plus a line along the land - and this is what is contemplated - will almost certainly have a devastating impact on many types of birds that have relied on this migratory path for thousands of years. We do have wind - that's why it is a migratory path. Birds are a significant part of our environment and their well-being needs to be considered.
2. The bat kills are substantial - not from collisions, but from bat lung collapse - and as you know bats eat lots and lots of insects. We are a county of organic farmers and growers. Pesticide use has gone up significantly in areas where turbines mix with farming, because insect damage goes up because bats die.
3. The creative rural economy on which our collective livelihood depends has as its principal driver tourism activity that centers around "sense of place and natural beauty." Two independent university studies have confirmed this. This \$100 million rural economy stands to be devastated if the proposed IWTs go forward here. We would end up with the largest concentration of IWTs of any place in Canada. Our economic development office contends that it could take about 40% out of our economy - an annual loss of \$40 Million dollars from reduced

tourism, reduced tax base due to property devaluation from proximity to turbines, reduced birding activity, harmful impacts on fisheries, boating, hotel and restaurant economies, and so forth. We even have developed a terrific organic dairy that makes goat and sheep cheese that is winning awards globally, but in Japan and other places, goats collapse from the stress of exposure to low frequency sound. This is on an island with only 25000 people.

4. They periodically catch on fire. Most of our summers, we live with a "burn ban" because of the danger of fire, swept by wind, across a landscape that is very dry. We are an island with a volunteer firefighting force, and are without the resources to effectively fight fires or malfunctions of turbines.

5. Despite having developed a rare and successful booming rural economy - thanks to investments by hundreds of small entrepreneurs who have taken risks on wineries, hotels, organic farms, cheese factories, art galleries, and so on - our real estate market collapsed, ahead of the general slow down in sales. Our real estate agents confirm that the biggest concern people have is the uncertainty about the turbine locations. Somewhere between 300 and 500 have been proposed for on land, somewhere between 200-600 have been proposed for the near shore. The concern is that in the end, our little rural community would end up having more 40 storey buildings than Vancouver, Montreal and Toronto combined. The subsequent devaluation has been documented in other areas as being as much as 40%. This leaves many home owners with bigger mortgages than the new reduced value of their houses. The challenges are starting to come in to MPAC about valuations, and the municipality is likely to see its tax base erode.

6. This uncompensated but effective expropriation of land is extraordinary and affecting many people. One of my friends on Wolfe Island can see and hear 68 turbines and their flashing lights and turbines from her porch. Her home is both uninhabitable and unsellable. But there are many like her. We do not wish to end up with our businesses, homes, and livelihoods ruined needlessly.

7. This issue has split our formerly agreeable community in two. People have come to blows, others have received threats, because some individuals - including a number on our municipal council - have received significant sums of money from turbine companies to support it or lease their land. Whether true or not, one young man in his mid twenties boasted of having made \$230,000 in commissions from having signed on farmers to lease their land. Nonetheless, the total amount that might be gained by all of the landowners paid for leases, has been estimated to only be in the range of about \$2 Million per year here. Of course, others - including the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the Canadian Farm Credit Corporation - have cautioned that these deals may ultimately be damaging to farmers, given the rights that they lose to the firms that lease their land. The leases are 20 years plus 20 more at the option of the turbine company or whoever they sell the lease to. The leases render the land unsalable. Although it may sound bizarre, because the leases involve secrecy clauses, there is uncertainty as to which landowners have signed them or for how much. But best educated and researched guesses suggest that it is about 40% of our land mass at a minimum. The companies that are leasing the land change hands regularly, as most of them are speculative plays. Some go

bankrupt like Skypower. But others, most in fact, seem to be being bought up by oil and gas companies for the carbon credits. Many of these in turn are being bought by Petrochina. This is a fact. So it is not out of the question that our prime farm land, major tourism sites, freshwater dunes, major wine region, and economic success story will come under the unfettered control of Petrochina and Samsung.

8. There are dozens of documented cases of people leaving their homes when turbines are located under 2km away from their houses. As you know, under the GEA, turbines can be placed only 500 meters from your home but right at your property line, effectively rendering your home permanently noisy - at levels far higher than allowed -, in the path of a strobe light, and leaving much of your property uninhabitable. It is not a fiction that people are getting ill, from sleep disturbance, vibrations, and so on. It is irresponsible of the government to ignore their experience. Often, when noise levels are demonstrated to be at jet engine levels, the companies offer to "mitigate" by planting trees. The tallest trees here are about 50 feet. The turbines are over 400 feet, so the trees do little by way of mitigation. An international conference on health impacts of IWTs is being hosted in Prince Edward County at the end of October. You would be most welcome to come and hear doctors from around the world, sharing the experiences of their patients.

9. Other countries have established outright bans in areas of "special scenic beauty", tourist routes, or sensitive environmental areas. Or setbacks of several kilometers. Scotland has a 7 km setback for instance. Here we have test towers right in the middle of sensitive areas. All zoning restrictions on turbines were removed. This was unthinkable for any industry - and has resulted in debasing years of community collaboration on development plans, sensible development, and appropriate siting of industrial activity.

10. And of course, there is the not insignificant issue that they don't really work very well. The turbines are producing somewhere between 10 and 22% of what they are claimed to produce; it is entirely uneconomic without massive subsidies - the same sort of subsidies that have virtually bankrupted economies in places such as Spain; a turbine has to turn about ten years to produce as much energy as it cost to get it built and installed and maintained in the first place; they only have a life of about fifteen years; and no decommissioning requirement was placed on developers; and in places where they have been massively deployed, no coal or gas plants have been eliminated because wind is so unreliable that you have to be able to back it up and nuclear plants can't stop and start on a dime. The subsidies are massive; the commitments have been made for 20 years!; and every hydro customer, in addition to paying some huge and endless sum for debt reduction, is even now being charged HST on that debt reduction charge! Thank God my bank doesn't do that on my mortgage.

11. And finally, we support renewable energy, but believe the massive amounts that we are letting escape over our dams in Ontario and the massive amounts our country exports to the US could be quite easily deployed here, achieving the same objective, at a fraction of the cost, and without all the negative impacts noted above. Yesterday we "wasted" about 1/3-1/2 of the hydro-electric capacity we had available to us, depending on the hour. And we believe that a much more localized,

distributed system of energy production would be more likely to promote renewable sources such as appropriate wind and solar, reduce consumption and waste in the current system, and be better for us all in the long run. It is also about scale. Human scale.

We did this research, made these observations, and came to these conclusions. We even shared our research with our MPP and several members of provincial cabinet at several stages over the past two years. But McGuinty didn't give it much thought. And he dares to insult us by calling us NIMBYs? When did willful ignorance become a virtue? When did our politicians make that patronizing decision that it would be better to destroy our communities, homes, livelihoods, interests and environment so that wind turbine companies could crown George Smitherman "Mr.Wind?" When did they start getting their advice from people who seem to not care about real evidence and sound energy policies, but who preferred the patina of a marketing campaign more suited for a new pharmaceutical placebo? And when did they get the right to make \$20 Billion dollar deals without tender, and sign them before most people caught on to what they were doing?

Your article in today's paper is the first full page critical article in the Globe that I recall seeing, and I hope it will not be the last.

The points made above are my own, and do not necessarily represent those of any group.