

The Big Wind Scam

Here come the bribes – part three of three

Opinion by Mike Bond

Despite Molokai's nearly unanimous opposition to the proposed industrial wind factory, its backers, Pattern Energy, Castle & Cooke, Molokai Ranch, Hawaiian Electric and Gov. Abercrombie, refuse to give in. Instead, they're sending a squad of consultants, including BioLogical Capital and Molokai Renewables LLC, to Molokai beginning April 25 to dangle bribes before us.

But the bribes they're promising (funds for schools, health care, roads, hotels, etc.) are based on the project's imaginary financial return. It will never make money (except for its backers) nor reduce our energy costs. Wind power is such a financial loser that wind power countries are cancelling new projects, turbine-makers are cutting production by up to 70 percent, and major U.S. utilities are finally telling the truth about what a total scam it is.

With federal debt over \$14 trillion, wind power is losing its major backer – the hard-pressed American taxpayer. “Two-thirds of the economics of wind power comes from federal programs and tax subsidies, because its revenues don't pay for project development and operating costs,” according to the website, North American Windpower. And without federal subsidies and tax breaks for billionaire corporations, wind power will literally run out of air.

Another big lie about wind power is its contribution to electricity demand. Big Wind proposes 400 megawatts (MW) installed capacity on Molokai and Lanai. This, they say, will provide 10 percent of Oahu's electricity needs. But wind power produces only a small fraction of its installed capacity.

One of America's largest utilities, the Bonneville Power Administration, with 12 percent of U.S. wind power capacity, has released 2008-10 data indicating their turbines run at only 19 percent of installed capacity. Similarly, Great Britain's wind installations only produce 21 percent of their installed capacity. At each of the four highest peak demand periods of 2010 their output provided only 2-4 percent of their own installed capacity. Thus, states the investment newsletter Alt Energy Stocks, “wind power stocks should be avoided like the plague.”

But do wind factories lower fossil fuel use? “Despite decades of experience and substantial installations in Denmark, Germany, and Spain, the giant turbines have not been shown to reduce the use of other fuels on the electric grid,” according to National Wind Watch.

“Wind truly has no generating capacity value, and its construction will not displace building any new coal or natural gas generating capacity,” according to Power

Engineering, July 2009.

“Despite the establishment of significant additional wind power, [fossil] fuel consumption remains almost constant,” according to Danish Environmental Report, 2008.

“Thirty GW of wind maybe requires 25 GW of backup,” according to Iberdrola – one of world’s largest wind power users, now cutting wind investments by 50 percent.

“There always must be gas or coal generation to supplement electricity when the wind either dies down or blows so hard wind generators cannot operate,” according to Texas Co-op Power.

This doesn’t even consider the impacts on Molokai, our health and property values. So when the friendly folks from Pattern, BioLogical Capital and all the other wind power hustlers come offering money for the destruction of our island, let’s just ask them, “What about no don’t you understand?”