

STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION  
LAND USE REGULATION COMMISSION

Application for Development of )  
Maine Mountain Power LLC )  
Black Nubble Wind Farm Application )  
Rezoning Application ZP 702 )

**NRCM’s POST-HEARING COMMENTS  
CONCERNING THE BLACK NUBBLE WIND FARM**

**I. Introduction and Summary** The Natural Resources Council of Maine (“NRCM”) submits these post-hearing comments to summarize our support for the Black Nubble Wind Farm, respond to comments made during the hearings on Rezoning Application ZP 702, and provide findings of facts based on the hearing record. As described in these and other comments submitted by NRCM as part of this proceeding, we firmly believe that the proposed Black Nubble Wind Farm is consistent with LURC policies and evaluation criteria, and that it should be approved by the Commission. In summary, our views are as follows:

- **Black Nubble is a better project because of the Commission’s actions.** NRCM opposed the original Redington Wind Farm, as did the Commission. But the Black Nubble Wind Farm is a different and greatly improved project. All 12 turbines and associated impacts for Redington Pond Range have been eliminated, and Redington will be protected from wind power development if the Black Nubble project is approved. This additional level of protection for privately-owned Redington Pond Range would not have been possible if not for the Commission’s initial vote.
- **Black Nubble clearly meets the “demonstrated need” criteria.** NRCM is unaware of any energy project in the State of Maine, of any type, that has garnered the level of support received by the Black Nubble Wind Farm, which has been endorsed by the *Bangor Daily News*, *Portland Press Herald*, *Maine Sunday Telegram*, *Kennebec Journal*, *Brunswick Times Record*, *Coastal Journal*, and TV Cannel WCSH-6, as well as more than 23 organizations. This broad evidence of support, State energy policies that endorse wind power, and other factors meet LURC’s “demonstrated need” criteria.
- **The project will not cause undue adverse impact to wildlife or habitat.** The revised project has eliminated the threat to Northern bog lemming, and according to the Department of Inland Fish and Wildlife does not pose an “undue adverse impact”

to Bicknell's thrush. Project opponents failed to substantiate their generalized claims of risk to declining species that may utilize habitat on Black Nubble.

- **The opponents' sense of beauty should not trump all other considerations.** The primary concern from many of the intervenor groups in opposition to the project was that the project would be unsightly to hikers on the Appalachian Trail, yet many members of the public have testified that they believe wind turbines are beautiful. NRCM does not believe that the Commission should let one group's sense of beauty trump another's in a decision on this application; nor do we believe that "beauty" trumps all other considerations – especially given the deficiencies in the opponents' visual impact assessments and representations of the project's potential impacts.
- **Project opponents failed to provide credible visual impact assessments.** Project opponents Erik Crews, Pam Underhill, and Jean Visserling each claimed to be putting forth arguments aimed at protecting the experience of hikers on the Appalachian Trail between Route 4 and Route 27, yet none of these three individuals has hiked that trail segment. Each acknowledged having actually experienced very little of the AT in the project area. NRCM's first-hand knowledge of this entire section of the trail shows that opponents: 1) purposefully exclude major visual impacts on the landscape that weaken their claim that the area is "pristine"; 2) exaggerate the scenic significance and accessibility of brief, often screened views along the trail; and 3) essentially ignore the substantial reductions in visual impacts caused by elimination of the 12 turbines on Redington Pond Range.
- **Approval of Black Nubble would set a precedent consistent with LURC policies.** The Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) calls on the Commission to protect mountains with "particularly high natural resource values," and to ensure that all of the "limited supply" of mountain resources in Maine not be made available for rezoning and wind power development. Protection of Redington Pond Range, broadly established as one of the most valuable, unprotected, privately-owned mountain tops in Maine, would be fully consistent with these policies and would set an important precedent for the type of mountain areas unsuitable for development.
- **Approval of Black Nubble will protect Redington; Project denial will not.** If the Black Nubble Wind Farm is approved, then Redington Pond Range will be permanently protected from wind power development. If the Black Nubble project is denied, then the only protection for Redington will be existing zoning – which can change, as can Maine policies, LURC regulations, LURC Commissioners, and public perceptions about global warming. Fifteen years from now, the public and decision-makers could feel that the need to respond to global warming trumps other considerations – and the owners of Redington at that time could return with a two-mountain project. One need only observe that the Kibby Wind Farm has emerged 13 years after the Kenetech project at the same site was terminated. Now is the time to protect the more ecologically significant Redington Pond Range, combined with approval of a wind farm on Black Nubble. This approach strikes the right balance.

## **II. BLACK NUBBLE IS A BETTER PROJECT**

When the Commission on January 24, 2007, cast its 6-1 preliminary vote against the original Redington Wind Farm, newspapers across Maine editorialized that a serious blow had been delivered to the future of wind power. One need only consider the titles of editorials in Maine's four major daily newspapers to recall the backlash (Exhibit N):

- *Maine Sunday Telegram* (1/28/07): "LURC wind farm vote a lost opportunity"
- *Sun Journal* (1/25/07): "Wind vote a savage blow to energy policy"
- *Kennebec Journal* (1/28/07): "Opportunity Lost"
- *Bangor Daily News* (1/31/07): "Which Way the Wind Blows"

LURC's January 24, 2007 vote can also be viewed as a vote in support of protecting Redington Pond Range – which the hearing record firmly established to be one of the most significant, privately-owned, unprotected high peaks in Maine. That vote paved the way for the return of a different and greatly improved project.

The scaled-back, single-mountain Black Nubble Wind Farm eliminates all of the turbines, roads, and associated development originally slated for Redington Pond Range. As a result, the Black Nubble Wind Farm across-the-board will have reduced environmental, recreational, and visual impacts compared with the original project. The project impact drops from 135 to 63 acres, and of the 63 acres of clearing, half will be in areas already disrupted by logging. The project will involve half as much road, and the ecologically sensitive, roadless area atop Redington will be left intact. The project is significantly further from the Appalachian Trail, and, unlike Redington, Black Nubble is not a hiking destination.

As part of the current proposal, Redington Pond Range would be permanently protected from wind power through an enforceable, permanent deed restriction. This additional level of protection (beyond existing zoning) for privately-owned Redington Pond Range would not have materialized if not for the Commission's initial vote.

The passage of time also has allowed the developer to further reduce potential impacts for the remaining project configuration on Black Nubble. As explained during the hearings, the engineering team has identified ways of reducing the impact of road construction beyond what was previously planned at Black Nubble.

## **III. BLACK NUBBLE MEETS "DEMONSTRATED NEED" CRITERIA**

The hearing record clearly shows that there is a "demonstrated need in the community or area" for the clean power that would be generated by the Black Nubble Wind Farm. This important LURC evaluation criterion is satisfied through the extensive support for wind power development in State law and Maine energy policies, and the degree of statewide public support that has been garnered by the project.

The Commission's August 1, 2007, panel discussion on energy issues clarified the strong view of the Maine Public Utilities Commission and Maine Department of Environmental

Protection that wind power is needed both for energy policy and environmental policy reasons. The Maine Wind Energy Act of 2003 provides a general endorsement for wind power development, and establishes as a policy of the State that “its political subdivisions, agencies, and public officials take every reasonable action to encourage the attraction of appropriately sited wind-energy related development consistent with all state and federal environmental standards...”<sup>1</sup>

The Maine Energy Council and Maine PUC have stated that wind power can help stabilize electricity costs to Maine consumers, enhance system reliability, and reduce the impact on the environment from the generation of electricity.<sup>2</sup> Enactment by the Legislature in 2007 of a revised renewable portfolio standard, specifically focused on new renewable energy (a mandated increase of 10% by 2017), further substantiates the intent of Maine lawmakers to expedite wind power development in Maine – including projects like Black Nubble.

Support for a project is one of the evaluation factors in determining “demonstrated need.” During the Black Nubble public hearings, the number of supporters and opponents from the public was essentially identical.<sup>3</sup> At the statewide level, however, the level of support for Black Nubble *greatly exceeds* opposition, and according to LURC guidance, statewide support becomes particularly important for projects (like this one) which have regional significance.<sup>4</sup>

The Black Nubble Wind Farm has been endorsed by more than 23 organizations, ranging from the Maine Chamber of Commerce to Maine Lung Association to Maine Council of Churches and the Conservation Law Foundation. All told, groups supporting the Black Nubble project represent more than 75,000 people, more than 5,000 businesses, more than 600 congregations, and 15 Maine colleges and universities

The project also has been endorsed by the *Bangor Daily News*, *Portland Press Herald*, *Maine Sunday Telegram*, *Kennebec Journal*, *Brunswick Times Record*, *Coastal Journal*, and TV Channel WCSH-6 (Exhibit O). NRCM is not aware of any energy project in Maine, of any kind, that has received this level of broad-based support. Support for Black Nubble is consistent with public opinion polls showing that Maine people support wind power by a factor of 85% to 11%, with the balance undecided.<sup>5</sup> Taken together, these editorials, endorsements, and poll results demonstrate that Maine people want to see wind power projects approved and built. This is a compelling “demonstration of need.”

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<sup>1</sup> 35-A MSRA §3402.

<sup>2</sup> Maine Energy Council Report, April 9, 2007; testimony by Mitchell Tannenbaum, Maine PUC Deputy General Counsel; Black Nubble hearings.

<sup>3</sup> NRCM counted 17 proponents and 15 opponents on 9/19/07, and 15 proponents and 18 opponents on 9/20/07.

<sup>4</sup> Black Nubble’s power will be put into a regional electrical grid, providing power far beyond the local area. LURC Guidance Document, “Clarifying the Rezoning Criterion of ‘Demonstrated Need,’” April 1, 2004, states: “projects with far-reaching impacts may warrant evaluating community support based on regional or state-wide perspective rather than solely a local viewpoint.” p 3.

<sup>5</sup> Spring 2007 PanAtlantic SMS poll. See NRCM Exhibit A in pre-filed testimony.

#### **IV. NO UNDUE ADVERSE IMPACT TO WILDLIFE OR HABITAT**

There have been two major wildlife and/or bird species of significant concern during this proceeding – the Northern bog lemming and the Bicknell’s thrush – and the hearing record shows that the Black Nubble project will not pose an undue adverse impact to either. Because there is no documented habitat for the Northern bog lemming on Black Nubble, that concern has been completely eliminated.

With regard to the Bicknell’s thrush, the Department of Inland Fish and Wildlife testified on Sept. 20<sup>th</sup> that the project will not have a significant impact, that there exists plenty of available habitat, and “in our opinion it is not undue.”<sup>6</sup> NRCM expert Dr. Jeff Wells irrefutably showed that the primary near-term risk to Bicknell’s thrush is the loss of wintering habitat in the Caribbean, and that the primary long-term threat is habitat loss (potentially complete in Maine by 2100) due to climate change.

Maine Audubon suggested that the courtship display by male Bicknell’s thrush are a source of risk to the bird, and that NRCM’s expert Dr. Wells did not address issues such as site disturbance, invasive species colonization, increased predation (jays and crows) or micro-climate changes – warming (from Jody Jones’ summary powerpoint presentation.) Dr. Wells provides the following response, dismissing the significance of these issues:

As far as the courtship display is concerned, the behavior occurs over a 3-4 week period with most of it centered in a two-week period. Generally only 1-2 birds per morning at a given location engage in the behavior and usually only once each morning (more rarely at dusk). Thus the number of birds and the period of time in which they engage in it is a tiny fraction of the time they are in residence on the breeding grounds. This fact, coupled with the fact that birds can see and avoid the blades, makes a mortality event from striking a wind turbine blade a very low probability event.

The four risk factors noted above are all broad, general impact categories when considering the effects of habitat fragmentation. Because the area has been subjected to major habitat change and fragmentation especially as a result of wholesale logging and building of roads and bridges and other infrastructure, any impacts from these factors would have already occurred there over the last 50 years and the fragmentation expected from the proposed project would not increase any of these risk factors for Bicknell's Thrush or other wildlife at Black Nubble. Factors like invasive species colonization, increased road mortality, and increased mortality from small avian and mammalian predators is strongly associated with increased human presence from building of homes, stores, businesses, and roads used for primary travel. This is the kind of fragmentation side-effect that you would see from a large development, but not for something like the Black Nubble project. None of the four factors identified by Maine Audubon are expected to have any impact on Bicknell's Thrush populations at Black Nubble.

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<sup>6</sup> Robert Cordry testimony.

Maine Audubon’s pre-filed testimony inaccurately states that Black Nubble “provides” habitat for 18 species that are either declining or of special concern in Maine.<sup>7</sup> Only four species of concern have actually been observed at Black Nubble. The other species potentially could occur in the project site area, but “possibility” is very different from observed use. Audubon did not provide any substantiation of the actual presence of additional species at Black Nubble, nor did Audubon substantiate that an actual risk exists to such species. Steve Pelletier explained during the hearing that none of the species on a hypothetical list of species at risk could be considered to utilize the Black Nubble site as a core habitat area.

In its claim that bird species would be at risk from the Black Nubble project, Maine Audubon’s testimony repeatedly references a National Research Council (NRC) study about wind power. Yet the NRC report does not have data specific to the northeast. Only two of the 10 wind farms utilized in the study were in the east: one in Tennessee and one in West Virginia. The report does not provide any data, findings, or conclusions about avian fatalities that could be used to help determine whether one forested mountain in Maine is more or less appropriate for wind power than any other. As such, the NRC report cannot be used as a tool to help with site selection in Maine.

A wind farm such as Black Nubble likely will result in bird collisions and some fatalities, but these must be kept in perspective with the broad range of threats to birds from existing forms of energy generation and use (see Jeff Wells pre-filed testimony, Exhibit 4), the long-range threat of climate change, the loss of wintering habitat for neotropical migrant species, and risks to birds from other human structures and threats.

Maine Audubon’s testimony attempts to highlight the threat of wind power to birds by trying to downplay the number and significance of bird deaths caused by other human-made structures and threats, such as buildings, cars, cell towers, and cats. Yet the risks from these other sources are significant and cannot be so easily dismissed. According to a recent article in the *New York Times*, for example, Audubon volunteers between 2002 and 2006 recorded 862 birds involving 66 species crashing into a single building (the Morgan Processing and Distribution Center) in Manhattan. During one half-hour period on November 4, 2006, 44 birds were found on the sidewalk in front of the building, of which 33 were dead.<sup>8</sup> Compared with other existing threats to bird species, the Black Nubble wind farm will not pose an “undue adverse impact.”

## **V. PERCEPTIONS OF BEAUTY SHOULD NOT TRUMP OTHER FACTORS**

David Field testified that “The central issue in this case, from the perspective of the Appalachian Trail Community, is aesthetics—beauty.” During cross-examination, Dr. Field acknowledged that the Commission cannot adjudicate on the question of beauty – because different people have different perceptions. Although he said that this is “self-

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<sup>7</sup> Maine Audubon pre-filed testimony, p. 3.

<sup>8</sup> “Long Perilous to Migratory Birds, A Building Gets a Makeover,” *New York Times*, 9/22/07, p.B12.

evident,” the Appalachian Trail groups are insisting in this proceeding that their perceptions of beauty trump those of others, and also trump other considerations.

Multiple members of the public have testified during this proceeding that they consider wind turbines to be beautiful, and that they would not find them unsightly if built on Black Nubble (see Exhibit P). Some have testified that they would welcome the sight of turbines while hiking on the Appalachian Trail.

NRCM concurs that “beauty— aesthetics” is the central issue in this proceeding. The Maine Appalachian Trail Club, Appalachian Trail Conservancy, and National Park Service all testified that their primary objection was that the project would be unsightly to hikers. Can one person or group’s sense of “beauty” trump that of others? Is beauty not a value that lies within the eye of the beholder? NRCM does not believe that aesthetics should be the deciding factor in this permitting process. This is especially true given the deficiencies of the visual impact assessments by project opponents.

## **VI. VISUAL IMPACTS MUCH LESS THAN OPPONENTS CLAIM**

Opponents of the Black Nubble project have repeatedly claimed that the experience of hiking the Appalachian Trail (AT) would be seriously impaired as a result of construction of the Black Nubble project, yet several of the leading “experts” against the project have never even hiked this section of the AT and the impacts they describe are overstated.

During cross examination, National Park Service employee Pam Underhill revealed that she has never hiked this section of the AT. She has not been to the top of Sugarloaf, nor to any section of the trail northbound from Saddleback, Jr. It appears that Ms. Underhill has hiked only from Rt. 4 to the Horn, then possibly to Saddleback, Jr. (or she may have visited that summit from a side trail.) Ms. Underhill’s visual impact specialist, U.S. Forest Service employee Erik Crews similarly has very little experience on the trail. Mr. Erik Crews has only visited two (Saddleback Jr. and Sugarloaf) of the seven locations for which he created visualizations, even though he said in his pre-filed testimony that “no simulation or photographic print can reproduce the clarity and FOV [field of view] seen with the human eye.”<sup>9</sup>

Similarly, the lead visual impact expert for the ATC, Jean Visserling, has only been to Saddleback, Jr., Mt Abraham, and a short (less than four mile) stretch of the AT from Caribou Valley to the top of Sugarloaf.

The fact that none of these three key witnesses for the opposing intervenors have first-hand knowledge of the Rt. 4 to Rt. 27 section of the AT raised serious questions about their credibility. NRCM does have first-hand experience of this entire section of the AT, having traveled the entire length with copies of all of the visual experts’ visualizations in hand. From that experience, we reach the following conclusions:

- 1) **Actual Visual Impacts:** The project would result in one significant stretch of visual impacts along the AT, from the top of Saddleback to Saddleback, Jr., but views of the

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<sup>9</sup> Pre-filed testimony, p.10.

project would be visible during only a portion of this 3.4 mile stretch. Other stretches are in the woods. The view from Mt. Abraham is the other significant location where the project would be visible, although the impact is reduced as a result of elimination of 12 turbines on Redington. Also, the nearest turbine would be 6.3 miles, which clearly is moving into the “background” according to U.S. Forest Service visual management system criteria.

- 2) **Most of the AT is Woods:** The reality of hiking the AT in this 34-mile stretch is that most of it is in the woods. Although Erik Crews and others say that the Black Nubble project would be “the focus of the hiker’s experience for a multi-day period,” this simply is not accurate. The average AT through-hiker traveling from Saddleback Jr. to Rt. 27 would hardly see the Black Nubble project at all during this entire 23-mile hike. Despite Attorney Plouffe’s attempt to liken Poplar Ridge to Yosemite’s Half Dome, Poplar Ridge is not a significant destination summit and passes by briefly to a hiker. Most through-hikers do not do the side trails to Mt. Abraham or Sugarloaf. The view from the Spaulding side trail is highly filtered by trees, and only will become more of a view if the MATC cuts trees down. The Crockers are forested summits with no view from the AT, unless one heads down a surveyors’ cut.
- 3) **Views of Other Human Structures Ignored:** There is no question that opponents have strategically attempted to ignore other human structures that come within view of hikers on this segment of the AT. For those who do hike to the top of Sugarloaf, one is surrounded by three cell towers, four buildings (one is constantly humming), chairlifts, picnic tables and more. Although Attorney Plouffe during cross-examination of Terry DeWan said: “You can’t see the Sugarloaf Ski Area from the AT at all, correct?,” the truth is that the entire Sugarloaf village of condominiums, lifts, hotels, roads, stores, parking lots, etc., is fully visible from locations less than 50 feet from the summit of Sugarloaf – the destination of the AT side trail. Similarly, one gets a full view of Saddleback parking lots, condominiums, base lodge and more when hiking up the Horn. These ski areas and the communications equipment atop Sugarloaf were absent from Erik Crews simulations and from Dr. Field’s aerial video.
- 4) **Elimination of Sugarloaf Cirque Impacts Ignored:** Elimination of turbines on Redington has resulted in elimination of one of the most significant visual impacts for the hiking experience on this stretch. AT hikers descending from Sugarloaf to Caribou Valley travel through an extended stretch (half mile) of open and filtered views that look straight across the valley to Redington Pond Range, less than three miles away. The project would now be completely absent from this stretch of hiking, yet project opponents barely note this major change, while at the same time they include in their list of concerns inaccessible, unremarkable, and filtered views where the turbines may still be visible.

By exaggerating the scenic significance of minor, filtered views, and by excluding from their scenic assessments the ski areas and the structures atop Sugarloaf, opponents have attempted to create an idealized notion of what the hiker’s experience may be on this section of the trail. Without question, this is one of the favorite hiking areas for many



hikers – including NRCM members and proponents of the Black Nubble project. But it is important to understand that this is not a pristine stretch of hiking.

#### **VII. APPROVAL OF BLACK NUBBLE WILL SET POSITIVE PRECEDENT**

The Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) calls on the Commission to protect mountains with “particularly high natural resource values,” and to ensure that all of the “limited supply” of mountain resources in Maine not be made available for rezoning and wind power development. Redington Pond Range has clearly been established in the hearing record as one of the most valuable, unprotected, privately-owned mountain tops in Maine. Approval of the Black Nubble project, and the accompanying restriction agreement on Redington, would be fully consistent with these policies and would send a clear message that a mountain ridge with values like Redington is not suitable for development.

Approval of the Black Nubble project also would send a strong signal that Maine is working to strike an appropriate and workable balance between competing values and interests when it comes to wind power development. Given the amount of support that Black Nubble has received, a denial vote would be perceived as a significant set-back by many people and organizations.

#### **VIII. PROTECTION OF REDINGTON NOT ASSURED WITH A DENIAL.**

If the Black Nubble Wind Farm is approved, then Redington Pond Range will be permanently protected from wind power development through an enforceable deed restriction. If the project is denied, then the only protection for Redington will be existing zoning.

A preliminary vote by the Commission in early 2007, and existing zoning, cannot be considered a long-term protection strategy for Redington. The top of Redington is owned by investors who demonstrated to NRCM during the negotiation process of the Redington protection agreement that they are intent on realizing a return on their investment. Maine policies, LURC regulations, LURC Commissioners, and public attitudes about global warming will change over the next 10-15 years.

Fifteen years from now, the public and decision-makers could feel that the threat of global warming trumps other considerations, and the owners of Redington at that time could return with a two-mountain project. But that option only exists if Redington is not protected now. One need only consider that the Kibby Wind Farm has emerged 13 years after the Kenetech project (proposed for the same area) was terminated.

The hearing record clearly and unequivocally documents that Redington Pond Range has superior natural resource and ecological features. Despite efforts by AMC and Maine Audubon to give Black Nubble new features, these recently-discovered virtues pale in comparison to the roadless, unfragmented, high-alpine habitat on Redington – the mountain which AMC’s David Publicover referred to 32 separate times in his pre-filed testimony for the original Redington Wind Farm, compared to only one minor reference to Black Nubble.

## **IX. CONCLUSION**

Based on these comments, our pre-filed testimony, and the views and remarks of other project proponents who have testified in this proceeding, NRCM strongly believes that now is the time to protect the more ecologically significant Redington Pond Range with the restriction agreement that has been negotiated and for LURC to approve the application for a wind farm on Black Nubble. We believe that this outcome is in the best collective interests of the people of Maine.

All forms of power have impacts, and wind power is no exception. NRCM members are passionate about mountain protection, and they are passionate about action to address climate change. They do not believe that either argument trumps the other. We need a balanced approach forward. Approval of the Black Nubble Wind Farm strikes the right balance.

**EXHIBIT N**

**EDITORIALS FROM MAINE NEWSPAPERS IN  
RESPONSE TO LURC VOTE AGAINST REDINGTON**

# Maine Sunday Telegram

CHARLES C. COCHRANE, *Publisher*

JEANNINE A. GUTTMAN  
*Editor and Vice President*

BOB CRIDER  
*Managing Editor*


ROBERT P. BICKLER  
*President and General Manager*

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## OUR VIEWS

# LURC wind farm vote a lost opportunity

Breaking our fossil fuel addiction will require difficult trade-offs with lasting impacts.

**T**he overwhelming thumbs-down the Land Use Regulation Commission gave to a proposed wind power project on Redington Pond Range was a shock and a disappointment.

Maine has much to lose if rising levels of greenhouse gas pollution unhinge the climate patterns around which our economy and environment evolved. The fourth iteration of the global climate assessment by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, due to be released in a few weeks, will reaffirm that rising carbon dioxide levels are forcing our climate into new patterns with unpredictable implications.

The state has wisely set a goal of generating 10 percent of its energy from in-state wind projects by 2020. The Redington project, whose 30 turbines would have added 90 megawatts – enough to power 40,000 Maine homes – to the grid, would have been a credible step toward that goal.

During the debate, several LURC commissioners said they recognized that the state needs to site wind turbines in the unorganized territories.

True, the Redington proposal presented some very difficult trade-offs. The project footprint would have bisected one of Maine's largest remaining roadless areas and the largest

contiguous tract of land over 2,700 feet in elevation. The towers would also have been visible from a stretch of the Appalachian Trail that is cherished by hikers for its remote feel.

There are some mountains in Maine, like Mount Katahdin, where wind turbines aren't appropriate. But wind speed increases with elevation. So if we're serious about wind power, we have to accept turbines on mountain ridges.

Perhaps commissioners truly felt the exceptional nature of this site prevented them from approving the requested zoning change.

Their views about the trade-offs inherent in mountaintop wind farms will soon get another test: A 150 MW project proposed by TransCanada for 2,900 acres in Kibby Township is slated for a hearing this year.

There's a bigger threat to our fragile subalpine ecosystems than wind farms. It's called global warming.

LURC commissioners need to show with their coming decisions that they understand this.

Critics of the Redington project said its approval would have sent a message that wind farms could be built on any available mountain peak.

Here's a challenge for LURC:  
If not Redington, then where?

# Sun Journal

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## Our view:

# Wind vote a savage blow to energy policy

*"It's in our vital interest to diversify America's energy supply — the way forward is through technology. We must continue changing the way America generates electric power, by even greater use of clean coal technology, solar and wind energy, safe nuclear power."*

— President George W. Bush, *State of the Union*, Jan. 23

*"No."*

— *Maine Land Use Regulation Commission*, Jan. 24

By a 6-1 vote Wednesday, the Maine Land Use Regulatory Commission stunned many by rejecting multi-million dollar wind turbine projects on Redington Pond Range and Black Nubble Mountain in Western Maine, despite its own staff's recommendation to approve it.

Endless Energy's development was in the works for nearly a decade, and faced severe opposition from adjacent landowners, environmental advocates, scientists and others. For every argument favoring the projects, wind power opponents went twice as far to find reasons to scuttle them.

LURC apparently listened.

Perhaps, now that gasoline has dropped below \$2 per gallon in some places in Maine, LURC believed this state shouldn't embrace alternative energies. Perhaps the recent warning from the Maine Public Utilities Commission about the gouging price of the Northeast energy grid fell on deaf ears.

Or maybe, this winter's unusually warm temperatures influenced its vote. Whatever the reason, LURC's decision to reject the sensible and necessary \$130 million Redington and Black Nubble projects could restrict the progress of alternative energy production in Maine by decades.

LURC's vote — the only supporter of the projects was Steve Wight of Newry, the owner of the Sunday River Inn & Ski Center — is a clear statement that Maine lacks the vision, and political will, to change its energy habits.

Critics said the Redington and Black Nubble turbines would have scarred a remote paradise, and opened a Pandora's Box threatening all of Maine's peaks with unwarranted development. It was also said that other sites exist, better suited for wind power development than these two peaks.

Except Redington and Black Nubble were the only developments proposed, and perhaps the last. Why would TransCanada continue its \$270 million wind power project on 2,900 acres in Kibby Township, for example, given there is now serious doubt that LURC would approve it?

We support wind energy, and supported the Redington/Black Nubble projects. Together, the planned turbines could have generated 250 million kilowatt hours of electricity per year, equal to 50,000 gallons of oil. They could have cleaned pollution from the air, here at the end of the "smokestack."

Instead, they probably have been tossed on the scrap heap of good ideas.

In the rhetoric about Redington/Black Nubble, opponents voiced many other scenarios under which windpower development would be acceptable. We strongly urge them to make these options their new agenda, and attack it with vigor equal to their campaign against Endless Energy.

After all, as the president said Tuesday night, developing and accepting methods of alternative energy production is concern, and priority, for all Americans.

Doesn't that also apply to Maine?

**KENNEBEC JOURNAL**

**JOHN CHRISTIE** Publisher

**ERIC CONRAD** Executive Editor    **NAOMI SCHALIT** Opinion Page Editor



**BLETHEN**    **MAINE NEWSPAPERS**

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OUR OPINION

REDINGTON WIND PROJECT DENIAL

# Opportunity lost

The world is changing quickly, and it's hard for us to catch up with those changes.

Nowhere was that more evident than in the overwhelming vote this past week by the Maine Land Use Regulation Commission to reject construction of a large wind-power project in the western mountains.

In a dramatic and unexpected reversal of its staff's recommendation, commissioners voted 6-1 to order the staff to draw up a denial for the project. Unless something unexpected happens in the next few weeks, that denial will spell the end of a 10-year effort by a Falmouth-based developer and his national utility partners to construct 30 wind turbines and associated transmission lines in the remote, high-altitude region.

It was the remoteness of the site, its proximity to the beloved Appalachian Trail and the existence of rare and endangered species on it that drove many environmentalists to protest the project. From the Maine Audubon Society to local residents to the National Park Service, the objections to the proposed rezoning of the mountaintops on Redington Pond Range and Black Nubble Mountain were detailed and vociferous.

From their point of view, Wednesday's decision by regulators was the proper one.

But from our point of view, it's a decision mired in the world view of the 1980s. That was a simpler time, it seems, when what we worried about was preserving land and species — not the global climate.

Yet as we have moved deeper into the 21st century, the dangers of global warming have become more real. The latest longterm climate predictions for northern New England depict a rapidly warming region. Global warming is caused by our overwhelming reliance on fossil fuel-based energy sources and if we continue on the same energy path that creates global warming, the Union of Concerned Scientists says that by century's end, summer in Maine will be more like summer in Maryland is now. The Redington windpower project offered a chance to stem our dependence on fossil fuel consumption and slow that inexorable trend.

That was precisely the point made by the one conservation organization to publicly support the western mountains windpower project. The Conservation Law Foundation said that the risks of global warming were

*The project denial is a decision mired in the world view of the 1980s. That was a simpler time, it seems, when what we worried about was preserving land and species — not the global climate.*

potentially far more destructive to the area proposed for the project than the project itself would be. They said that the habitat and species lost would, ultimately, be more dramatic under the suffocating blanket of global warming than under the turbines, asphalt and transmission lines of the 90-megawatt proposal. They said that while the mountaintops being considered for the project were precious, they would be considerably less precious after global warming was done with them.

We agreed.

Yet despite ample evidence of the perils of global warming to the very mountains they were trying to protect, commissioners did not agree. The one dissenting vote came from Commissioner Stephen Wight of Newry. Wight got it just right when he said, "We need to figure out how to be part of the solution and not just complain about it."

Does this spell bad news for the other large windpower proposals in northern Maine? We don't believe so. This decision was controversial from the start because it involved hallowed ground. The other projects don't. Does a stunning reversal of a staff recommendation mean the review system is broken? We don't think so. Commissioners are political appointees and if the governor is unhappy with them, he can change appointees when their terms are up.

But there are longterm consequences to this disappointing decision. State regulators have virtually killed the possibility of a windfarm that could have produced — cleanly, without any climate-altering emissions — energy for 40,000 homes. The Redington turbines, if erected, would have avoided the need for power plants to spew out 800,000 pounds of air pollution a day.

In this shortsighted decision, Maine has lost an opportunity to protect its precious resources over the longterm.

# Bangor Daily News

Founded in 1889

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## WHICH WAY THE WIND BLOWS

An optimistic report on wind power by the Public Utilities Commission addresses potential sites for placing turbines. It observes that while mountain ridges traditionally have been seen as optimal places for wind-power development, large areas of flat ground — blueberry or potato fields — “are also considered by some as viable candidates for wind facilities.”

But what Maine has learned in the rejection by the Land Use Regulation Commission of the Redington Wind site is that talking about optimal placement and the performance benefits of one topography vs. another is largely meaningless.

The state not long ago created The Maine Wind Energy Act to “take every reasonable action to encourage the attraction of appropriately sited wind-energy-related development.” Before that, it created the Maine Climate Change Act to respond to the threats to the state’s flora, fauna and overall health. These acts, under the LURC decision last week, turn out to mean the state will site wind power with the same enthusiasm it would site a coal-fired plant: as the undesirable tradeoff for the endlessly desirable turning on of lights, televisions, air conditioning, computers, clocks, washers and dryers, coffee pots, hair dryers, stoves, dishwashers, toasters, refrigerators, and on and on.

Under the rejection of the 30-tower proposal, “appropriately sited” wind turbines would mar no one’s bucolic view with the reminder of the cost of all that is waiting at home to ease life along.

It’s true that power generation doesn’t belong just anywhere and people really do need places where the view is uninterrupted by the cost of their necessities and pleasures. But any theory about wind power displacing a measurable

amount of fossil-fuel power here depends on the placement of hundreds of these turbines in Maine. The Conservation Law Foundation argues the locations at Redington and Black Nubble mountains represented “one of the relatively few suitable sites for commercial-scale wind power in the state.”

CLF calculates that New England needs about 8,000 megawatts of wind power to meet regional climate-change goals that Maine agreed to. The Redington site would produce 90 MW; Mars Hill could produce 54. Maine has the greatest wind potential of any state in the region — but potential doesn’t turn on the lights.

The LURC decision could set a precedent that would preclude from development other sites of scenic or ecological value while avoiding the underlying reason for the need to site wind turbines — the ecological threat of climate change.

The nation, Maine included, has powered itself into a polluted corner, and the question is whether, for a relatively brief time, it can endure the use of these low-polluting but unsightly structures while it searches for better energy choices. The structures will by necessity be proposed for scenic areas because dramatically high places are coincidentally scenic and windy (The same might be said for dramatically fast flowing rivers and tidal areas. Humans are drawn to places of natural drama, setting up endless battles between the appreciation of nature and its utility.)

The unintentional but inescapable answer from LURC was stick with oil or gas or coal before upsetting the landscape. It is choices such as these, made for entirely understandable reasons, that push the state and the nation ever further into that polluted corner. There is no pleasant way out.

**EXHIBIT O**

**EDITORIALS FROM MAINE NEWSPAPERS**

**IN SUPPORT OF BLACK NUBBLE WIND FARM**



**KENNEBEC JOURNAL**

JOHN CHRISTIE Publisher

ERIC CONRAD Executive Editor NAOMI SCHALIT Opinion Page Editor



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# Black Nubble wind project's undeniable merits

Last January, the state's Land Use Regulation Commission dealt wind-power developer Harley Lee a huge blow when all but one member voted thumbs down on his proposal to build a 90-megawatt project on Black Nubble and Redington mountains in western Maine.

After 10 years of work by Lee to bring the proposal to fruition, commissioners found themselves unable to sanction construction of huge turbines in the sensitive alpine habitat long cherished by naturalists as well as hikers on the adjacent Appalachian Trail. This, despite the fact that the commission's own staff had recommended approval of the project.

It was a blow, as well, to those who believe that the ecological perils of global climate change outweigh the ecological impact of turbine and road construction on the mountains.

We joined with those who protested the decision as shortsighted and, to a degree, sentimental. The critical challenge to produce non-carbon polluting energy means that we need to take a hardheaded look at the tradeoffs when projects like these are proposed. What was once unacceptable in the era before climate change may now require us to adjust our standards. That's the nature of compromise in the face of threat.

A compromise emerged this Monday.

That's when developer Lee and a host of environmental, public health and clean energy groups announced that the wind-power developer had agreed to scale back the project to just Black Nubble Mountain, which is farther away from the Appalachian Trail than Redington.

The new proposal to the commission is for construction of 18 turbines versus the original 30; they'll produce

*The critical challenge to produce non-carbon polluting energy means that we need to take a hard-headed look at the tradeoffs when projects like these are proposed.*

power for the equivalent of 21,545 Maine homes annually instead of the original 44,300. And if the state permits construction of that substantially smaller project with less environmental impact, then Lee will permanently restrict wind-power development on Redington Pond Range, which is the last undeveloped and unprotected 4,000 foot peak in Maine.

The application to the commission states that, "on balance, the Black Nubble Wind Farm will result in long-term benefits and does not cause undue adverse impacts to the jurisdiction." At the same time, developers claim that "the environmental benefits from this project, which include cleaner air, reduced emissions of greenhouse gases that cause global warming... outweigh the limited adverse impacts of the Black Nubble Wind Farm."

There are some environmental groups in opposition to even this new plan, but many more have appropriately jumped on board with Lee. We supported the plan the first time around when it included Redington Pond Range. Now, by coupling a promise of protection for Redington with a scaled-back project, we hope Lee can similarly convince the commission of the project's undeniable merits.

*OUR OPINION represents the opinion of the Editorial Board of this newspaper: Publisher John Christie, Executive Editor Eric Conrad and Opinion Page Editor Naomi Schalit.*

# Maine Sunday Telegram

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## BLETHEN MAINE NEWSPAPERS

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### OUR VIEWS

# Now is the time, this is the place for wind

State regulators should consider the broader benefits of the Black Nubble proposal.

**W**ith wind power, perspective is everything.

It's an energy source that decreases our dependence on foreign oil and a technology that doesn't contribute to global warming, so wind power promises worldwide benefits.

But you can't hide man-made turbines on the tops of pristine ridges. They create sight, sound and other impacts that are decidedly local.

The Land Use Regulatory Commission has just completed a hotly contested three-day public hearing on the proposed Black Nubble wind farm near Sugarloaf. This time, the commission should decide that the broad benefits outweigh the local costs and approve the proposal.

This is the second time around for this project. A previous plan, which included turbines on the top of Redington Mountain as well as Black Nubble, was defeated by a 6-1 vote, in large part because of the visual impact that the wind farm would have on a pristine section of the Appalachian Trail.

This proposed wind farm would also be visible from the trail and has many of the same opponents, including Maine Audubon and the Maine Appalachian Trail Club.

A major argument against the wind-farm proposal is that it produces little

energy in exchange for the damage it would cause. Black Nubble is proposed to be a 54-megawatt plant. A modern gas-burning generator would be rated at 500 megawatts or more.

The fact that wind is not the entire solution, however, doesn't mean that it isn't part of it.

All the power produced by wind and other renewable sources will allow fossil-fuel-burning plants to produce less power. That means less oil, gas and coal, and fewer carbon emissions to be trapped in the atmosphere.

According to Peter Didisheim of the Natural Resources Council of Maine, an environmental organization that supports the Black Nubble plan, there is no one solution for all of the nation's energy problems.

"We are going to need probably 20 different 5 percent solutions," he said.

Maine's land use regulators are facing a difficult task that changes the usual decision-making dynamic. Instead of weighing economic benefit against environmental protection, the board will have to consider competing environmental harms.

For wind power to move forward as part of Maine's energy future, LURC members should decide that the benefits outweigh the costs, and approve the Black Nubble plan.



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## OUR VIEW

# Wind farm still makes sense for Maine

A new proposal from Maine Mountain Power ought to have it easy, but the rules are hazy.

The developer wanting to build a wind power operation in Maine's western mountains has returned to the Land Use Regulatory Commission with a plan that might fly but maybe not. It's hard to say, and that's a big problem for Maine as it contemplates its energy future.

Maine Mountain Power LLC had proposed 30 wind turbines on two mountain tops near the Sugarloaf ski area. Its \$130 million plan for Redington Pond Range and Black Nubble Mountain would have generated about 90 megawatts of power, enough for about 40,000 homes.

It was always a controversial idea. The Redington turbines would have been within a mile of the Appalachian Trail and would have been erected in an area that is home to some rare species that depend on subalpine habitat. Still, the LURC staff reviewed a 3-foot stack of documents on the project and concluded that its benefits outweighed its liabilities. They recommended that the panel give its OK.

Instead, the commission voted 6-1 against the project, saying that its charge under the law to protect the unorganized territories from inappropriate development didn't allow for

construction in such a sensitive area. Much of the criticism of the plan was aimed at what Maine Mountain Power wanted to do on the Redington Pond site. That mountain top is closer to the trail and has the rare species that many are concerned about.

So, the company is back with a plan to put towers up only on Black Nubble Mountain and a plan to protect Redington Pond Range from development of this type in the future.

Maine needs this kind of energy project as it contemplates a future where the costs of using fossil fuels — both in terms of dollars and the environment — is likely to be high. The original plan was a reasonable trade-off between visual as well as environmental impacts and our need for clean energy. The cost-benefit analysis of the new plan tilts even more in favor of moving forward.

But nothing is certain because LURC is operating with outmoded rules that — based on its last decision — don't allow it to give proper weight to the need to head off global warming to protect Maine's natural resources.

LURC ought to give its OK to the Black Nubble project if it can. More importantly, the Legislature has to

Natural Resources Council of Maine is actively backing the project, sending out staff members to tout its environmental benefits.

Still, some opponents of the original plan still don't like this one, so it's not at all clear that it will get LURC approval. Indeed, what LURC decides to do here is anybody's guess, and that's a problem.

LURC was established when Maine's unorganized territories were mostly in the hands of a few land owners tied to the state's paper and lumber industries. Back then, toxic waste, clean water and air, and preservation from development lopped the list of concerns of environmentalists.

Now we live in an era when Maine's wild lands are owned by a wide variety of people and companies with a wide variety of interests. Clean water and air still matter, as does conserving wild places. But a new threat has climbed to the top of the list of environmental worries: global warming.

If we continue to burn fossil fuels at current rates, there won't be a sub-alpine habitat at the top of Redington Pond Range to protect. The woods lose the very character that LURC is charged with protecting.

The state is studying how to fit wind power into its future plans. It's important in that process that proper weight is given to the fight against

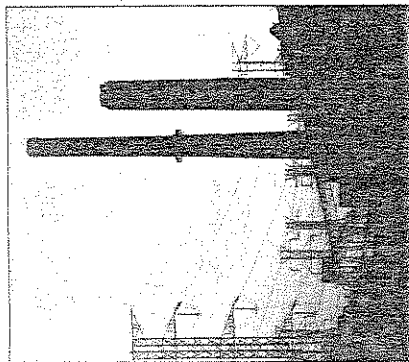
global warming. What that means is that LURC should get clear guidelines that tell it that, except for a few clearly defined sensitive areas, wind farms are a permitted use in the unorganized territories. That kind of blanket endorsement is necessary because workable wind farms are only going to be put into place if investors think they can make money from building them.

For wind farms to take root in Maine on a broad scale — and supporters say the state could easily support 1,000 megawatts of wind power — the market has to have the ability to identify and analyze potential sites.

Even more important, wind farm developers need certainty to justify spending money on their proposals. Most developers will tell you they don't mind when certain areas are made off-limits to certain kinds of development. They just don't want to sink money into projects that can't win approval.

LURC's approval of the Black Nubble plan — which will be the subject of a hearing Sept. 19-21 — would be a good start toward a more rational policy toward wind power in Maine.

What's needed in the medium term, however, is the Legislature's clear and unambiguous endorsement of clean energy projects for Maine, wherever they make sense.



2004 file

The cost of burning fossil fuels — both in terms of dollars and impact on the environment — is rising.

create a smoother path for renewable energy projects in Maine generally.

The latest Maine Mountain Power plan calls for building 18 turbines that will generate 54 megawatts. Notably, it would cost \$110 million to build, just \$20 million less than the original plan. Rising prices for turbines — which are more in demand these days — are part of the reason for this.

The new plan has attracted broader support from environmental groups than the old. Notably, the influential

# OPINION

## Supporting clean, green energy at Black Nubble

The Coastal Journal adds its voice to a chorus of supporters of the Black Nubble wind farm project in Western Maine. Black Nubble was part of the original Redington project, which was turned down by LURC, despite the support of its own staff in January.

We sincerely hope LURC will do better this time around.

### EDITORIAL

The Black Nubble ridgeline will support 18 turbines capable of producing enough electricity to power 21,500 Maine homes. In addition, the owners of the Redington ridgeline have promised that if Black Nubble is approved, they will forever protect Redington Ridge, the last undeveloped alpine ridge in Maine.

Obviously, this is a win-win situation for Mainers and their energy needs, but also for all the living things - birds, plants, and other animals - that inhabit our great state, and for the planet as a whole. Wind power generates no pollution or carbon dioxide, which causes global climate warming.

Supporters of Black Nubble include a broad coalition of health, economic, political, educational, legal, consumer, and environmental groups. Supporters include the American Lung Association of Maine, Maine Center for Economic Policy, Wiscasset's Chewonki Foundation, Maine Council of Churches, Community Energy Partners, Maine Electric Consumers Coalition, Conservation Law Foundation, Maine Energy Investment Corporation, Democracy Maine, Maine Global Climate Change, Inc., Ed Holt & Associates, Maine Interfaith Power and Light, Energetic Management Associates, Maine Public Advocate, Environment Maine, Maine Public Health Association, Franklin County Development Corporation, Maine State Chamber of Commerce, Green Campus Consortium of Maine,

Natural Resources Council of Maine, Independent Energy Producers of Maine, Physicians for Social Responsibility/Maine, and the University of Southern Maine Sustainability Office.

So just who is *opposed* to Black Nubble?

Sadly, one organization in particular which should greatly welcome clean, green energy on behalf of those who fall within their advocacy, specifically birds and other wild creatures that inhabit Maine has once again come out as opposed to the project. Maine Audubon's "advocacy" includes shorebirds and marsh dwellers, many of whom will find their habitats underwater in less than a century due to global warming, if the least dramatic scenario turns out to be correct.

If the worst case scenario turns out to be correct, Maine Audubon will lose some 24% of the birds they advocate for to habitat destruction along the coasts and in protected salt marshes.

Maine Audubon says that they are not opposed in principal to wind power, but that it just doesn't approve of this project. With all due respect, we have heard that before too many times. Maine Audubon has opposed every single wind project in Maine, at least initially. And those which it ultimately accepts - like the Kibby Mountain project in Franklin County - significantly cut down the number or heights of turbines they planned, and donated large sums of money to purchase conservation lands, as part of the "negotiation" process with Maine Audubon.

It is time for LURC to do the right thing by all of Maine's residents - human, animal and plant - and for Maine Audubon to start advocating for *all* its wildlife, including its shore and saltmarsh bird life whose habitats are so perilously close to the rising sea. Environmental organizations, including Maine Audubon, should not be opposing clean, green energy from wind ... they should be welcoming it with open arms.

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## A PLACE FOR WIND

When it again begins consideration of a wind power project in western Maine, the Land Use Regulation Commission has an opportunity to clarify where such infrastructure is appropriate. The answer must consider the difficult balance of protecting Maine's unique landscapes with the inevitable damage that will result if the state and the country don't alter their energy supply.

Earlier this year, LURC recommended denial of a 90-megawatt wind farm on Redington and Black Nubble mountains. Despite a staff recommendation in support of the 30-turbine project, the commission voted 6-1 to recommend denial, citing concerns about its impact on views and the mountaintop ecology.

Since then, the Natural Resources Council of Maine has negotiated with Maine Mountain Power to scale back the project to include turbines only on Black Nubble Mountain while forever forbidding them on the higher and more sensitive Redington Pond Range. This is an important compromise that will protect wildlife habitat and reduce the project's visual impact in exchange for building renewable energy infrastructure in a more appropriate place.

Rather than deciding where wind turbines don't belong, the state needs

to find more places where they do. A task force created by the governor can help, but more immediately, LURC must make such decisions. The commission will begin hearings on the scaled-back project Wednesday. A decision is expected later this year.

A major concern of opponents of the project is that wind turbines will mar the view. While it is true that wind power doesn't belong just anywhere, there is a cost for a ready supply of electricity to power computers, lights, refrigerators and other conveniences of modern life. Often those costs are borne elsewhere — in West Virginia where mountaintops are removed for the coal underneath. Or the costs will be borne in the future — when pollution is so thick to obscure the mountain views or has killed the vegetation that made the view appealing.

To reduce those costs, or at least stop them from rising at their current rate, hundreds of wind turbines will be needed. The Conservation Law Foundation calculates that Maine needs about 8,000 megawatts of wind power to meet regional climate-change goals to which Maine agreed. Black Nubble will contribute 54 megawatts.

Moving ahead with this project is a small but needed step toward lessening our dependence on highly polluting coal and oil to power our lives.

## EDITORIAL

# Positive energy

An interactive exhibit at the Royal Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh invites visitors to “become the energy ministers of the future.”

Based on computer data that projects energy demand, cost, availability of resources, population and other factors, the simulation challenges all comers to devise the most viable and efficient ways to meet the United Kingdom’s energy needs through 2050. To generate enough power to meet anticipated demand, players must decide what kinds of energy plants to build and where to locate them.

Most scenarios result in social, economic or environmental calamity, largely because risk and cost variables hemorrhage the energy delivery system.

Quickly, players learn that energy planning consists primarily of “lesser evil” choices and hard compromise. The exercise demonstrates that it’s highly unlikely future energy needs can be met without a sharp shift to renewable sources. But those sources can only be tapped in specific locations.

The exhibit provides a stark “fast-forward” glimpse at the daunting task the global community faces to produce enough energy to maintain a 21st century lifestyle.

A similar exercise for Maine would provide important context for judging the merits of Maine Mountain Power’s proposal to erect a wind farm on Black Nubble Mountain in Franklin County. In a compromise brokered by the Natural Resources Council of Maine, Maine Mountain Power proposes to generate electricity by placing 18 wind turbines atop Black Nubble Mountain. As part of the deal, the firm would agree to a restrictive covenant that would prohibit wind power development on nearby Redington Pond Range

The project’s impact on the state’s overall social landscape — not just the vistas along one remote mountain range — must be paramount in deliberations by the Land Use Regulatory Commission, which begins three days of hearings on the application today at Sugarloaf.

When viewed from a broad, global perspective, the wind farm looks like a clear winner.

Wind is a perpetually renewable resource. It neither depletes natural resources nor adds to pollution.

Converting wind to electricity adds nothing to the human carbon footprint. In fact, it represents a genuine alternative to fossil fuels. The revised application submitted to LURC asserts that the electricity produced by the Black Nubble Wind Farm would “prevent the equivalent of approximately 400,000 pounds of pollution per day from being released into the air from existing power plants.”

One need only look to the hundreds of Appalachian mountains beheaded to mine coal or the nuclear waste storage cylinders in Wiscasset to see scars left by past reliance on non-renewable energy sources. Planning to meet Maine’s and the nation’s future energy needs must include analysis of outcomes, not just output.

Because it promises to provide energy in a way that leaves a lasting positive impact on Maine’s broad human landscape — while also reflecting Mainers’ long-standing penchant for squeezing the most out of what Nature makes available — the revised Black Nubble Mountain wind farm proposal represents a desirable compromise.

## Wind

Last Updated: 8/10/2007 10:04:35 AM

I'm Fred Nutter with this WCSH 6 Editorial.

We add our voice in support of the proposal to build 18 wind turbines on Black Nubble Mountain, near Sugarloaf. So far as we know there are no homes nearby. Nobody will be disrupted by noise. You will be able to see the wind towers from the top of Sugarloaf, but skiers should be looking down the mountain finding a safe trail to the bottom with the wind farm behind them. At least 16 leading business and environmental groups in Maine have raised their voices in support.

The wind farm will light up 21,500 Maine homes. That reduces the amount of oil needed to fire up generators of electricity. And that will help reduce the toxic waste fossil fuel plants pump into the air.

Another plus for environmentalists is that part of the proposal includes a no development protection plan for nearby Redington Mountain. The original plan called for a wind farm there but now the 4,000 foot peak will be protected from development.

The Black Nubble Wind farm proposal is a win-win solution, according to the Natural Resources Council of Maine. We support the project which will have its public hearing in September.

That's our opinion we welcome yours.

Fred Nutter  
Editorial Director  
8/10/07

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**EXHIBIT P**

**PUBLIC TESTIMONY THAT TURBINES ARE BEAUTIFUL**



**Excerpts from August 2006 Public Hearings on Redington Wind Farm  
Page Numbers from LURC Transcript in parentheses**

**Susan Devaney, Steuben, Washington County Maine (127)**

"I've seen windmill farms all over the world, and they can be absolutely beautiful."

**Lisa Standish, Kingfield (482)**

"To me wind farms are beautiful symbols that represent the beginning of the end to oil wars, dirty air, global warming, and acid rain."

"I've been a member of the Appalachian Mountain Club, the Audubon Society, the Sierra Club, the North Canoe Trail. I have forever been a staunch advocate for the protection of our wildlife and wilderness resources. I'm a corporate trustee for the Trustees for Preservation, which is the oldest land conservation organization in the country."

**Kyle Duckworth, Bar Harbor (516)**

"I looked at them [wind turbines] and had a good feeling inside. I felt hope, I felt hope that we can make the changes that we need to make, I felt hope that someone was leading the charge into a new way of thinking."

**Lindsey Rustad, property owner in Rangeley Township, AT Through hiker. (543)**

"I'm an Appalachian Trail hiker, but I also have to say that it's such a personal -- I particularly think that wind turbines are majestic and they're beautiful across the landscape, and as an Appalachian through hiker, if I saw one wind turbine, 30, 40, 100, I would feel very positive about that."

**Kenneth Haley, Rangely Plantation (547)**

"I think someday -- three or four years down the road, whatever it's going to be -- the hikers hiking that Appalachian Trail and loving these mountains like most of us here do, they're going to be taking side trips over to Redington/Black Nubble to see those wind towers and consider that a thing of beauty."

**Peter Garrett, Winslow (555)**

"We also shared with our friends the beauty of these structures. I'm surprised to be telling you this, but it's so. They are not only some of the most elegant man-made structures that we had ever seen, but their slow winding we also found very, very peaceful and inspiring. Seeing and living with these wind turbines was one of the highlights of our brief visit to Denmark, as much as it was the Baltic Sea, the fascinating farms of Bon home island, and the singing of black birds and nightingales. They were a beautiful part of that trip."

**Marcia Smith, Wyman Township (566)**

"I'm a hiker and I cherish the views from The Horns, Eustis Ridge, Table Land, Mt. Abraham, all peaks that were mentioned earlier tonight. I would not be offended by the site of wind towers producing clean renewable energy from any of these viewpoints."