

Email received 3/17/15 as Public Comment for the 3/24/15 Public Hearing on Renewable Energy Siting

Good Day,

As the powers in Montpelier will be considering issues on renewable energy sitings soon, I would like to implore that they do some very basic research into the truths of the matter, before creating irreparable damage to the unique things that make Vermont, Vermont. The philosophy of: "We must destroy our environment, to save our environment!", makes even less sense once a bit of fact exploring is applied. This would require a very different approach from how the current administration has been addressing this problem.

1) Vermont is already within the very top states, as far as clean Electrical Generation is concerned. No one is denying that concerns, such as: global warming, pollution, carbon footprint, and the like, do exist. We, in Vermont, bear nearly zero responsibility in those, as it applies to the generation of electricity. We are currently VERY clean in that category. In spite of the fact that the current administration has worked very hard in eliminating 75% of the clean electrical power generated within Vermont. You are shooting the wrong suspect! I can identify at least 50 better options that can be employed here in VT, that address those global concerns... and not one of them requires bulldozing 200 miles of our mountain tops, nor smothering our pristine meadows with expansive solar farms.

2) From my observations, the recent rush to covering our state with solar farms has appeared mostly in untouched meadows. If one were to totally ignore the facts outlined above, on electrical generation in our state, and still feel a need to continue... why are we starting with our fields and meadows?? Less visually intrusive sitings for solar arrays might include: roofs of Wal-Marts and big box stores, roofs of office buildings, roofs of factory buildings, sun shading over parking lots, and such. Why aren't we starting there?? The state should be offering incentives for those utilities who choose a factory roof over a meadow... and demanding penalties from those who choose a meadow over a Wal-Mart roof. Once all the less visually intrusive siting locations were exhausted, and it was still felt that there was a need for more... then we could begin considering including our 'literally green' meadows.

3) On average, in the US, there is a 50% loss in electrical transmission. The further the distance from generating station-to-end

user, the greater the power losses. Yet, the earliest sitings of wind farms has been in the NorthEast Kingdom. And solar arrays in rural fields. Both as far away from urban centers as can be imagined. By the time that light trickle of renewable electric power reaches its destination, there is very little left.

4) Vermont may be as guilty as most when it comes to global concerns. This appears in our poorly insulated homes, office buildings, and factories. Our use of fuel oil and wood to heat our homes. Automobile emissions. And, other like issues. But not in electrical generation. We should be focusing on these areas, if the goal is to solve the global concerns.

5) Please keep in mind that we live in Vermont. This, seemingly obvious statement, has not been included in Montpelier's earlier imparitives. We are a small rural state, with a small population. Plug-in electric cars may have a place in an urban setting, but not in a location like Vermont. Hybrids, and plug-in hybrids, make much more sense here.

6) When using the term 'Renewable Energy', you may want to consider new less inclusive labels. Wind and solar fall under 'renewable'. But, so does a wood burning power plant. Wood is technically renewable, as new trees can be planted. But, burning wood is certainly not pollution-free. Please include that distinction when discussing renewable energy.

7) We have access to all the renewable electrical energy we could ever envision using from our neighbor to the north, in Hydro-Quebec. Why are we in such a rush to destroy our state with industrial-scale wind farms, and vast solar farms?? Please apply some homework and sanity when discussing and proceeding. Thank You.

Peter Morris  
Burlington, VT