

Katie,

Below are my comments re last evening's hearing on solar/renewable energy siting.

* The cheapest and most effective climate change response is the protection of existing, functional, ecosystems. Such ecosystems should be protected via statute.

* Building excessive renewable energy facilities does not translate into effective climate change action. Such—effective climate change action—means developing resilience in existing natural systems AND reducing fossil fuel emissions.

Vermont is doing neither. The state has yet to meet a carbon emissions goal. Yes, we have a "gold rush" of renewable energy development occurring but that poorly regulated response does not necessarily reduce carbon emissions.

* I suggest both committees read the Summary Statement of the final report of the Energy Siting Commission appointed by Governor Shumlin in October of 2013. Quoting from the Summary,

From an April 30, 2013 VT Digger article by Andrew Stein, “Based on the hundreds of documents, expert testimony and public comments received over the past six months related to Vermont’s electric generation siting process, the Commission has concluded that there is a need for the Section 248 process to be revised to address a shift in the size, scope, and pace of proposed projects over the last decade,” the commission wrote. “In particular, the Commission acknowledges the need to move towards a process that is more open, accessible, and inclusive, while also providing greater clarity, predictability, and efficiency.”

* As for industrial wind siting, I suggest the committees refer to the New Hampshire siting criteria and the process for developing such. No need to reinvent the wheel.

Respectfully,
Steve E. Wright
Ridge Protectors

Box 124
Craftsbury Common, Vermont 05827