

## **Melodie McLane - Georgia Mountain**

1.20.16

My name is Melodie McLane and I have lived on Georgia Mountain for twenty-eight years with my husband Scott. We raised four boys there on 25 acres of land that we cleared and a home that we built from the ground up.

In 2012 the Georgia Mountain Wind project began operation, approximately 3800' from our home. We are one of the closest homes to the project. Since then, the noise from the project has become a dominant force in our lives. On nights that the wind is out of the south or north and the turbines are operating at half to full capacity, we cannot sleep due to the noise.

Other neighbors around Georgia Mountain are also experiencing sleep deprivation, headaches and depression due to noise pollution from the project. One sleeps downstairs in her recliner many nights to escape the noise in her bedroom. Another sleeps in his basement. One neighbor's son moved off the mountain to get away from the noise. We all run fans, close windows, insulate walls and windows in an attempt to escape the noise.

**Document number one** that you have from me is a copy of the Department of Public Service's (DPS) reply to our recent filing of a Motion for Relief, which we filed on November 2, 2015. On page 3 of 7 of that document the Department states that their division of Consumer Affairs and Public Information (CAPI) has received seventy-seven noise complaints from around the Georgia Mountain project since the start of the project. Twenty-two of those were ours. The last noise complaint we filed was on September 18, 2015.

Our noise complaints to the project owner over the past three years have been met with "we are in compliance". It took the PSB three years and twenty-two complaints to act and order the DPS to investigate.

In that same document number one, Page 5 of 7, the DPS states that it finds the issues raised in our Motion to be credible or serious. They say the same can be said of the complaints they have received from other residents living near Georgia

Mountain Wind and other commercial wind sites. But, the limited number of complainants does not support a finding of a *public health impact*, but is “indicative of a significant impairment of our quality of life”.

It is very clear that we are collateral damage, and the DPS is not going to help us. Their recommendation is that we find relief in the form of a private nuisance and/or personal injury claims in Vermont Superior Court.

Is this really what the State of Vermont wants for its citizens, to file lawsuits in order to protect our health and welfare? Dozens of neighbors from existing projects and hundreds from proposed projects will be left with this option if the sound and siting standards and complaint processes aren't changed.

If the State of Vermont wants to promote wind energy, it needs to do the work to establish the infrastructure, similar to what Denmark has done. Some of this work should include the following:

- a. Act to establish more stringent noise standards for existing and future wind installations, which may include limits on hours of operation.
- b. Clarify and streamline procedures that neighbors adversely affected by industrial wind can use to obtain relief. If noise levels exceed the new established standards, property owners should not have to go to court to obtain relief.
- c. Make the process of filing complaints clear and straightforward and ensure that any complaint filed with the Division of Consumer Affairs and Public Information are shared with the Vermont Department of Health and logged on a public website for transparency and accountability.
- d. Stop our ridiculous policy where neighbors should police the noise emitting from a wind project and enact third party continuous monitoring that exists at other wind projects and airports.

**Document number 2** is a screenshot of the continuous noise monitoring system used at the Denver International Airport, “Webtrak”. There is a link on this document to the webpage. This screen shot shows noise

levels around the airport (green circles). This is a dynamic program and the noise levels continually change, but in this particular shot, it shows the noise level at the small “house” symbol near the end of the runway to be around 45 dBA. This is the presently acceptable noise limit emitted from the Georgia Mountain Wind project. The “house” symbol on the screen shot is about the same distance from the runway that we are from the project. This is a pretty good representation of why it sometimes sounds like we live at the end of an airport runway. This is also an example of how continuous noise monitoring by third parties and paid for by the owners of industrial wind facilities could put full time monitoring in place. It is transparent and easy to navigate.

If the State of Vermont won't do the work necessary to assure that wind turbines and Vermonters can co-exist, then the technology should be banned.

Thank you so much for making the time for us today. I welcome any questions that any of you may have and would also welcome you to our home to listen to the noise. You are our last hope to reform our policies to protect Vermonters. Can we please work together to find a speedy resolution for our family and one that creates a positive environment for energy transformation in Vermont going forward.

