

### **Wind Farm Plan Re-visited**

In a recent issue of the Chowan Herald James Robison presented a well documented article on the disadvantages of electricity generating wind turbines. This, of course, is a very timely topic because of the proposed construction of a "Wind Farm" along the Perquimans-Chowan border by the Apex Clean Energy Company. I completely agree with Mr. Robison's argument that the disadvantages of such a wind farm may well eclipse the advantages. I would like to add some other considerations not specifically mentioned and usually burked by the operators of wind turbines.

Although wind turbines may appear to some people as a panacea to rid us of fossil generated energy, it actually is not that simple. Admittedly, it seems to be free and clean energy thanks to the wind. However, there are numerous caveats, disadvantages and drawbacks which are usually marginalized by the manufacturers and operators of wind turbines

The turbines are quite expensive to build and need frequent costly maintenance and repairs. They are to a great extent made of fiberglass which, of course, is made from oil, a fossil fuel which ironically they're trying to avoid using. Also, the net usable energy production is only 28% from its advertised potential I have been told by experts in this field. At night a lot less power is required and the perishable commodity of electricity cannot be stored. Electricity cannot be stored in the grid at all - it is used as it is produced. And that is one of the major problems with wind power. Because of the variability of the wind, the amount of power the wind turbines produce fluctuates greatly. Since the amount of power flowing into the grid must roughly match the amount of power being used, this variability of power being generated causes a big problem for the companies controlling the grid. Standby generators must always be online ready to take up the slack for the variability of wind generated power. Naturally, when there are low or no winds the mills come to a standstill.

An often overlooked point is the great hazard to birds and bats. A current research project germane to this major problem indicates that an average of 360 birds or bats are killed annually by each of the wind turbines. This includes small and large migrating birds as well as eagles, ospreys and the like.

Large wind farms are needed to provide entire communities with enough electricity. For example, the largest single turbine available today can only provide enough electricity for 475 homes, when running at full capacity. It is not difficult to figure how many would be needed for a town the size of Edenton or even Hertford.

In addition to the ugly landscape polluting structures, almost never mentioned is the substantial noise pollution. One running wind turbine makes the same noise as a family car at 70 mph.

Should the above mentioned project go ahead and moreover, be supported by your tax dollars? I think not on both counts.

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