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Wind turbines not friendly, not wanted
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The previous week's edition of the Manchester Journal had yet another misinformed and off the mark communication from wind development promoter, Keith Dewey of Weston. Mr. Dewey and his colleagues have failed, for nearly three years, to understand that the distorted representation of "facts" and attempts at scare tactics do not work with Vermonters and area residents. This is why Catamount's proposal for Glebe Mountain has been so resoundingly rejected by the vast majority of residents, the Planning Commission and, finally, the Select Board of Londonderry.

Contrary to the author's allegations, wind development is highly industrial. It's construction is devastating. It's appearance is horrific. It's damage to the environment, wildlife, tourism and real-estate is indisputable. With all that ugly negativism, there should be superb compensating benefits. But there are not. There is no beef. There is no real service for the public good. It's just another tax shelter for the super rich.

It's all about money for the developers and trifling drips and drabs for a local community with unbelievably modest production. Not just occasional or a rare 5 or 10 percent downtime but regular, daily, constant off line down time. Searsburg, which the wind proponents love to cite, has an functionality of just 21 percent.

To call it unreliable or unpredictable, is a kindness. Worse yet, it works best when the grid doesn't need it. It's use it or lose it; it does not store. Windpower, as some of its advocates like to call it, is an oxymoron; it's practically powerless.

The Great White Elephant of windpower: Denmark, is a prime example. The marginally informed but dedicated wind advocates love to point to it as a leading success story. Denmark has to dump nearly half their wind production into the spot market at below market prices and below their costs because they have it when they can't use it, despite legislation that stipulates much of its purchase and heavily supports its production.

Frequently though they have to "call" for imported nuclear power and, irony of ironies, they have not closed a single conventional plant. All this has the unenviable effect of giving Denmark the most expensive electricity in Europe; double even what is paid in energy costly Great Britain.

Vermont actually has the lowest per capita fossil fuel use in the nation. We do not use it in the state for electricity. Petroleum is used throughout the rest of the country for only about 8 percent of energy output. These "crippling" factors are little delusional strawmen that the op ed writer has set. The so-called "frightening" issues of Vermont Yankee are just more of the wind industry's now desperate use of scare tactics.

Vermont Yankee will be extended in March and thereafter expanded. Hydro Quebec reps through the Minister for Power's office have repeatedly indicated their desire to maintain contracts with Vermont. The predictions that costs will be exorbitant are just more negatively twisted propaganda attempts by the wind industry's spokesmen and creatures. Biomass plants operate throughout this state on a 24/7 basis. Methane gas, solar systems and, yes, even modest (90 feet high) individual windmills support some farms, private homes and emergency facilities in the near wilderness. Wind can work, as Governor Douglas has stated, in small scale, sensible cases.

Vermont currently has a superb mix of renewables. One of the best in the nation and in the world. We are well ahead of the cutting edge. We have no need to be dragged down to the problem levels of Massachusetts or Connecticut. We don't need wind plants and we don't need to be proselytized in such sneaky, underhanded and deceitful manners.

The wind industry love to emphasize the significance of the insignificant: fossil fuel (which we don't use), disappearing contracts (which are not disappearing), polls about Vermonter's who supposedly favor wind power (when they often are not Vermonters, never are in areas impacted with the threat of turbines or are populations that know very little about the subject and, of course, the questions are always misleading puffballs), megawatt numbers that are overall capacity (without revealing these do not reflect downtime and need to be reduced by 60 to 80 percent) . It really is a disgraceful and deplorable record and something the Attorney General of the State of Vermont should be examining.

The author closes with that disingenuous invocation and overused remark of the intellectually weak: "Save our children's future." We have built and are building our children's and our grandchildren's future's and preserving what Vermont stands for and what Vermont has that few other societies and entities can still point to. Our ridgelines and our natural resources are not for sale to hucksters and carpetbaggers. Leave while you still can. Those are the facts.

David Hoopes, Londonderry