

## Letter to Londonderry (VT) Registered Voters

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*August, 2005 by Stewart Cole et al*

Dear Neighbor,

We wonder whether you are aware of the plans to build an industrial wind electrical generating plant on top of Glebe (Magic) Mountain? Catamount Corporation, an unregulated subsidiary of Central Vermont Public Service, has announced its intention to apply in October 2005 for permission to build twenty-seven 348 foot tall wind turbines along the ridgeline of Glebe Mountain. If built, each generator will be as tall as a thirty or forty story building, and they will stretch along the ridgeline for three and one half miles. Many will be strobe lighted (red at night and white during the day) and all will be clearly visible from five miles away.

The proponents of this project claim that wind power is an effective and cost-efficient way to produce renewable, emission free energy. Our research has convinced us that this claim is false. In fact, wind turbines are expensive, inefficient and unreliable. Because wind is variable, the electricity produced by these enormous machines is intermittent. But homes and businesses require a reliable and constant source of power; hence wind turbines can never replace more conventional and reliable sources of energy. The current fashion for wind energy is only sustained by massive government subsidies and tax write-offs, as well as mandated purchase of wind energy regardless of the cost.

But even if wind screw generators were a reliable source of power, which they are not, Glebe Mountain would be the wrong place to build them. Because of its position overlooking the valley, Glebe Mountain provides a focal point and an identity to the town of Londonderry. It is for this reason, presumably, that the Town has chosen to put a picture of Glebe Mountain on its web page. Jean Vissering, the landscape architect hired by the Town to evaluate the visual impact of the proposed wind plant, has said that it violates important criteria for the siting of wind plants, and that, if built, it will change the character of the town.

Who benefits from this massive industrial installation? Clearly, not the taxpayers and electricity consumers who are footing the bill for these enormous machines or, for that matter, our local wildlife whose habitats will be disrupted. Nor does the Town of Londonderry stand to benefit. Londonderry's economy, even more than that of Vermont as a whole, depends on tourism and second homeowners, who are attracted by the town's environment, amenities and life style. Since Catamount's project would permanently change Londonderry's identity, environment and quality of life, it is bound to have a significant and adverse impact on the town's economy. Furthermore, any electricity which is produced will not be sold to Londonderry residents or reduce local electric rates; instead it will be sold to out-of-state utility companies for "green credits", thereby

allowing them to continue to pollute. The only beneficiaries, in fact, will be the stockholders of Catamount and the landowners who are willing to lease their land to Catamount.

What can you do? Let us know of your opposition, so that we can include your name on a petition opposing this project that will be sent to the Select Board and to the Public Service Board at its hearings this Fall. You can do so by writing, emailing or phoning Hugh Kemper or David Hoopes. We and your town need your support urgently.

Best Wishes

Stewart & Nancy Cole Curt Cowles Vicki Greene

Katherine Hoopes Inge Hawrylow