

<http://www.reformer.com/Stories/0,1413,102~8855~3151825,00.html>

While wind power is worthy, wilderness is irreplaceable

Editor of the Reformer:

In response to recent letters advocating the industrial wind development proposed for Glebe Mountain, I am sorry to say that I am not convinced that this development will accomplish much more than padding the pockets of a few individuals. Unless it can be proved without a doubt that the benefits gained from building this industrial wind power plant will clearly outweigh the harm it will cause, I firmly believe it should not be built.

Certainly the Catamount Corporation has offered us no such proof. The "facts" they have spoken of in public meetings seem to slither and slide depending on their audience. Catamount has no legal obligation to disclose their final plans to the public until they file their application for a permit with the Public Service Board (which will ultimately determine the fate of our mountain). Meanwhile, as people try to make sense of the elusive "facts," this issue has turned friend against friend, divided neighbor from neighbor, and town against town.

I truly wish there was evidence to support the idea that, by building this wind power development, Vermont Yankee would be shut down. I also wish that by building the largest industrial wind power development in the Northeast on the top of Glebe Mountain, we would be contributing something substantial toward combating global warming. However, unless it can be proved that building this huge wind power plant would be a major contribution toward accomplishing either one of these worthwhile goals, it makes no sense to needlessly sacrifice Glebe Mountain as a symbolic gesture toward saving the planet. Doing so would surely not be in the best interest of our children or our planet.

Although Glebe Mountain and other ridgelines in Vermont are not pristine wilderness, they represent an irreplaceable wildness which is as important a symbol of hope for the survival of our planet as any human gesture. As Vermonters make serious attempts to combat global warming through conservation, convincing our state to purchase pre-existing hydro dams (if the opportunity happens to arise again in the future), installing solar panels and utilizing small-scale wind turbines, we can be grateful that we have protected the mountains for our children.

Henry David Thoreau put it so clearly: "In wildness is the preservation of the world."

Cate Kelley

West Windham, Nov. 30