

**From:** Miss Jessie K Avitia [jkahummingbird@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 17, 2016  
**To:** Monroe, Pamela and Committee  
**Subject:** Docket No 2015-02: Antrim Wind

Dear Ms. Monroe and members of the SEC:

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed industrial wind facility in question. I am not a resident of New Hampshire; actually I live in California and attend Humboldt State University where I will soon be graduating with a B.S. in environmental Science and Policy. I do not believe this makes me an expert in any matters regarding the Antrim Wind Project. However, I do spend three to five weeks every summer in New Hampshire. I spend my money on hotels, tourism and local businesses and I spend a considerable amount of time in Antrim and specifically at Willard Pond. After graduate school, I hope to buy property in either Antrim, Hancock or Stoddard. For these reasons I hope you will take my comments into consideration during final deliberation.

I would like to state first that I am strongly in favor of alternative energy development and recognize the necessity for such technologies in the face of rising global carbon emissions and climate change. It is important, however, to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate alternative energy projects. For reasons outlined in this letter, I firmly believe that Antrim Wind is the latter.

I know from firsthand interactions that the sheer beauty and sense of wilderness of Willard Pond alone, attracts people and tourist dollars from Vermont, Massachusetts, New York, Maine and beyond. As I have mentioned, I travel 3000 miles from California every summer to experience the feeling of sanctuary provided by the mountains and waters of Willard. Of all the beautiful places I've been, from Yosemite to Yellowstone to Acadia National Park, to the tropics of Cost Rica and Panama, no place has captured my heart the way the Willard has. If this sanctuary were traded for wind turbines, I don't know that I would or could return to New Hampshire and I don't believe I am alone in feeling this way.

It is my understanding that the renewable Energy Act of 2007 set forth an admirable goal to source at least 25% of its energy from renewable resources by 2025. It is also my understanding that the ultimate, and fairly obvious reason for this goal is to reduce *overall* carbon emissions. So, I must ask if the proponent or any agency involved has performed an analysis of carbon debt and carbon payback. When accounting for the loss of trees and vegetation, the excavators and other large equipment powered by fossil fuels, the increase in vehicle miles traveled for construction, decommissioning and maintenance, and the fuel used to run the backup generators for the turbines, how long before the reduction in carbon emissions resulting from the turbines, which is no longer being absorbed by that portion of the forest, is equal to or exceeds the amount emitted throughout the life of the project?

I would like to stress the interdependency of the ecological, economic and community values at stake. With far fewer trees and more soil exposure, I fear the long-term effects of increased erosion the Antrim Wind project will have on the quality of the lake, both aesthetically and ecologically. The sight and sound of these 400-plus foot atrocities proposed by the proponents will be disruptive to abutting property owners, recreationists, wildlife and the overall wilderness experience of those who love and admire the area. Further, these impacts cannot be predicted or accurately quantified without several years of baseline data which would also be essential to monitoring impacts throughout the life of the project if approved. If this data has not been established (and I apologize, I do not know if it has or has not), it would be utterly irresponsible of not only the proponent, but the Committee to move forward

with the Antrim Wind project. On the Antrim Wind website, they stress the importance of community values but as I read the testimonies and transcripts from previous hearings, and engage in conversations with New Hampshire residents who I personally know, it would seem that the proponents have failed to engage in conversation or solicit opinions from several important stakeholders – many of which are opposed. It would also seem that the only community opinions they care about are those of the stakeholders which share the same values (are in favor of the project). I am aware that the proponent has proposed mitigation of the impacts by setting aside 900 acres of land for conservation and placing the ridgeline into conservation once the turbines are installed. It is crucial to acknowledge that not all tracts of land are of equal quality or value. What is lost by destroying Tuttle Ridge and Willard pond cannot be replaced by just any stand of trees. The organisms (especially aquatic organisms) dependent on that ecosystem cannot simply relocate, and the people that find solace in the sanctuary cannot fly fish or kayak or admire loons in the backyards of the landowners who have agreed to put land into conservation. And I can hardly see the value in preserving a highly degraded landscape. Is not better to take a proactive, rather than reactive approach and preserve it while it is still a stable, intact ecosystem?

As I've stated, I support renewable energy when it is developed in appropriate places. A steep-sloping ridgeline, beside a pristine lake, in the middle of a super sanctuary, that attracts thousands of tourists, provides sanctuary to the locals and abuts many opposing property owners is not an appropriate place. This project is at best, an attempt to fix a problem by not only creating new problems, but contributing to the very problem it seeks to fix. There is a very simple principal of ecology that applies to just about any decision one could be faced with: "There is no such thing as a free lunch." I know that all solutions come at a cost but the cost must not outweigh the benefits. In the case of the Antrim Wind project, I fail to see how the benefits could possibly outweigh the cost. I assure you I could go on for several more pages with my concerns about fragmentation, biodiversity and the false analogies which the proponents and their supporters have a tendency to use in their arguments, but I know this process has gone on for a very long time and the SEC's time is valuable, so I will spare you. I love New Hampshire; I can think of no place on this Earth that brings joy, love and peace to my mind and my heart as only Willard Pond has ever done. I urge the Committee to deny the Antrim Wind project and preserve the sanctuary in its entirety for current and future generations.

Thank you for your time and your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,  
Jessie K Avitia