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To the Site Evaluation Committee:

It comes to mind that while I've written a whole lot about the proposed wind-tower project in the Phillips Brook basin of Coös County, most of it was for various publications and may well have escaped, thankfully for themselves, members of the Committee.

A lot of hot air and wind (much of it mine) have been expended on this project, which involves constructing 33 towers, each 410 feet tall with a blinking red light atop, over some 15 miles of our horizon, and we're not even talking about the road system, which in my book is actually about as bad as the towers. Okay, we don't own the horizon. Someone else does. Still, we are a nation of horizons. It's in our collective national psyche. If we don't own it, we should.

Which is precisely the point. The Phillips Brook tract is the exact same tract that many people from both sides of the aisle, from conservative to liberal, from Republican to Democrat, have been struggling for lo these many decades to buy in the public interest--- to keep as working forest, to protect its high country and wetlands, to keep on the tax rolls, to remain open for public recreation. It would add to the working forest and recreational lands of Nash Stream and the Vickie Bunnell forest. We have not been able to come up with the dollars. The developers have.

We live in a place of few cash crops. One is the scenery that drives our tourism. The other thing we have is a few wild places where you can plant a foot, pivot like a hoop-star, and gaze at a landscape uncluttered by anything but the Milky Way. The value on that? Incalculable. Again, tourism, and the stuff of the soul.

A whole bunch of far-seeing people walked both sides of the aisle to preserve the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Tract for your grandchildren and mine, for all time, for jobs, recreational access, and the sheer value of the landscape itself. Good thing we did---just look all around at everything else. I defy anyone to say that this move was not a good thing. Take a drive around the Deadwater Loop Road in Clarksville and Pittsburg and look northwest. All over on the other side of Route 3, all over what's left of the high country, the surveyors and bulldozers are at work.

The bottom line is that we live in a state that already generates twice as much electrical power as we use. We do not have to be tagged with the good-do-bees burden of contributing our small share of the landscape to more power into the New England Power Pool grid for those living, investing, and making money far below.

We should be smarter than that.

The high country of the Phillips Brook tract should remain unsullied while the conservation and stewardship community continue efforts to acquire it as largely working forest, open for public use and remaining on the tax rolls. Sure, its current owners can log it, right to the tops of the mountains and ridges---a threat already made in pursuit of the wind project. That would be a shame, but I'd rather look at clearcuts that will grow back than see huge scars of high- country roads and 410-foot towers with their night-stealing red lights.

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