

Dear West Virginia Highlands Conservancy,

I'm a long-time member of WVHC from Pittsburgh, PA. I've been reading about the question of wind power in *The Highlands Voice*, and would like to comment.

I think we must enthusiastically support wind power (along with other clean, safe energy sources). We must support these as an alternative to energy sources, such as coal, which are so environmentally destructive. Of course, we must also support efforts towards conservation of energy. I was pleased to see the article about the bottle bill in the latest *Voice*—it's an endorsement of a philosophy we should embrace. That is, to reduce the shocking wastefulness of our society in order to conserve energy and resources. It seems so simple and clear. Perhaps if we could just learn to be more careful, we could avoid the environmental destruction caused by our enormous energy and resources consumption.

As for the wind power project proposed for the Allegheny front just north of Dolly Sods, it's a tough issue. I dearly love Dolly Sods wilderness, Dolly Sods North and the stunning, inspiring vistas from Bear Rocks. I think this is an incomparable resource that must be protected—without question and without compromise. I believe that windmills too close to these areas would destroy their sense of wilderness. That would be a tragic, irreplaceable loss.

So how close is too close? Well, when I stand on Bear Rocks, I can already see those distant towers of the Mount Storm power station. But they are pretty far away, and don't compromise my sense of wilderness very much. I would suggest that windmills that far away would be perfectly acceptable. Any closer would be unacceptable. Stack Rocks, just one mile north of Bear Rocks, is absolutely too close!

That brings me to my conclusion about the project. As I recall from the plans described in the *Voice*, there are three phases: Northern, Central and Southern. I do not recall the timing of each phase. But, I feel that the Northern Phase is acceptable and could be supported. Some portion of the Central phase (perhaps the northern 1/3 or so) is acceptable and could also be supported. However, I feel that the Southern phase is totally unacceptable and we should vigorously oppose it. My working assumption behind this is that any windmill towers south of the Mt. Storm plant would be too close to Dolly Sods.

I realize that there may be other valuable areas—beyond Dolly Sods—that may be negatively affected by these windmills. I haven't carefully considered that. But, my main point is that there may be a way to support some portion of the wind power project, while still protecting the values and places we hold most dear. I would hope that WVHC can find a position on the issue that does just that. Thank you for time in considering my thoughts, and for the great work WVHC does.

Sincerely,  
Rob Henning  
Pittsburgh PA