

OUR READERS WRITE

Dear John,

Sorry to have put you in the middle of this, but I am compelled to respond to Tom Rodd's excoriation in the July issue. As suggested in the June issue, I have attempted to volunteer to participate on the Conservancy's Wind Committee. My offer has met with less than enthusiastic acceptance, although I have recently been included in some emails and invitations to visit potential wind sites. This seems my most appropriate response.

THE UNENDING SPIRAL OF IT - I apologize to some readers, but I cannot let Tom Rodd's July reply to my June reaction to Linda Cooper's original letter on the horrors of wind energy go unanswered. Please note that the land of which I am currently steward is neither in a coal field nor a high-priority wind power area - although I've often requested information on the wind potential and would dearly like a couple windmills on "my" the ridge line. At least I could feel like I'm trying to live within means of my footprint.

If the Voice is not the place to discuss these issues, then why has so much coverage been given to the [anti-windpower](#) agenda? One note of an alternative view and it receives such a vitriolic response. Tom alludes to my making "invidious" comparisons. I'm not really sure what he means but I must suggest that folks compare and contrast Kayford Mountain and the like and the miles of valley-filled streams with occasional windmill sites and some electric lines on ridge tops.

How about this for a front page headline in The Highlands Voice!

Trillions and Billions of birds, bats, frogs, soil organisms and other ecosystem participants continually destroyed by coal mining and burning. Windmills and conservation offer millions to billions times reduction. Developing windmill bird/bat-discouragement methods and technologies offer further orders of magnitude reductions.

Sorry, but the landscape of WV has been impacted by human activity for 10-50,000 years. Nothing you see is pristine or "unspoiled" (whatever that means)! Where are the chestnuts? "Native" Americans significantly impacted these ecosystems for thousands of years before the recent influx of Europeans, etc. Certainly, we have exacerbated the situation and significantly increased the rate of change.

I enthusiastically applaud all those Tom mentioned who have "fought coal companies"... for whatever ages - whether "for a living" and perhaps more so, as a volunteer.

I certainly disagree with the giant corporate [wind farm](#) approach - especially with the builders failing to take long-term responsibility for their projects. However, Tom suggests that "its not right to criticize people who are fighting [wind power] for their communities welfare." Given acid rain levels here, what does he think I'm doing? I must reiterate that yacht owners around Cape Cod would love to sister with some groups here for assistance in their efforts to stop off-shore wind farm possibilities which would impinge upon their viewscapes. Although a Gemini, I must also reiterate my great difficulty understanding "environmentalist" who use coal-generated electricity to fight wind power.

(Continued next page)

Tom mentions that “The multi-billion dollar scrubbers being installed on the John Amos Plant will cause ten times more Appalachian coal mining...” I can not really tell from his letter whether he figures this is good or bad for West Virginia communities as a whole? I’ve suggested in the Gazette that the best and highest use of mountain-top-removal sites [May there never be any more!] is photovoltaic and wind electricity generation.

How ‘bout if anti-wind folk push their representatives and legislators to institute net metering so that they can get full economic value for their home-generated electricity - be it photovoltaic, wind, biomass, or whatever renewable? Or are they still on the coal-fired grid? How ‘bout they get their electricity supplier to offer renewable alternatives (at a higher price, of course) like many surrounding areas do? - and pay more of the true cost of electricity? How ‘bout anti-wind folk institute maximum energy efficiency in their homes and offices? How ‘bout considering air conditioning a sin?

If apologies are due, I offer my most sincere apology to any anti-corporate wind activist who is off the coal-fired grid.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,
Bob Hamburg
Orma, WV