

Looking at Wind Energy

Recently I needed to go to Remsen and took Route 81 south and cut over to Lowville on Route 177 from Adams Center. I drove through some beautiful north country landscapes, including the "wind farm" that's over that way.

People who are interested in this issue, both for and against, would do well to visit the region. I was impressed with their size and felt they were sort of "in proportion" with the high rolling hills of that landscape. Route 177 weaves around as many north country roads do, and there were times when the view included a strange mix of wind generators that appeared to be turning in two different directions. I had to focus on the road at that point because these two sets of visuals were physically disorienting.

On the return journey I took Route 12 back through Watertown. The view was different. All generators seemed oriented in the same direction. They did manage to peek over the tops of very old stands of trees on those hills. I have also visited a couple of other "wind farms" down around Canastota. They are smaller installations and again more in proportion with their

landscape.

I'm sure they are something one could get used to and even feel good about if it were certain that the region would benefit by their presence. Then again, careful layout and consideration for minimal impact on the natural beauty of our region is a must. We need to invest in a future that is secure for everyone involved; land owners, visitors, and all the native species and future generations effected by such large projects.

After attending the recent informational meeting presented at LaFargeville Central School I am even more convinced that greater attention to many more details needs to be paid. The visual devastation these large structures could bring to our region is only the tip of the windmill. As citizens we can request that our local representatives create zoning changes that adequately protect our health, environment, and property values.

With so much to consider, it's wise to slow down a little, ask lots of questions, do some research about the effects such projects have had on other areas - both positive and negative. We need to make sure that the "green" in this energy isn't just profits made by corporations and their shareholders.

Informed decisions will be easier to live with.

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