September 6, 2017

SENT VIA EMAIL and REGULAR MAIL

To: Governor LePage
Somerset County Delegates
State of Maine
L UPC
DEP
MA Electricity providers

Re: Opposition to Industrial Scale Wind Development in Somerset County, Maine.

Dear Officials:

Please be advised that the purpose of this letter is to express the Somerset County Commissioners’ opposition to additional industrial scale wind development and its associated facilities in Somerset County or the Moosehead Lake Region for the following reasons:

1) The adverse visual impact of 500+ foot wind turbines and associated transmission required for interconnection and other supportive facilities on the world class scenic beauty of Somerset County, the Moosehead Lake Region and its surrounding communities.

2) The permanent destruction of ridgelines along with the adjacent development areas caused by the construction of over two hundred turbine pads, hundreds of miles of access roads, bridle path transmission corridors, plus utility substations and facility control centers.

3) The adverse impact on dark/night sky by turbine aviation navigation lighting. The Moosehead Region is renowned for its dark/night sky and has already been effected by the aviation lighting from the Bingham Wind facility 26 miles to the southwest.

4) The adverse economic and visual impact of the currently proposed industrial wind facilities in the Moosehead Lake Region and surrounding towns and townships. The proposed projects are: NRG’s Somerset Wind, EverPower’s Northwest Wind, Next Era’s Alder and Moose Wind and EDF’s Timberline Wind. Together they could install 231 turbines covering hundreds of thousands of acres.

5) The potential to permanently alter ridgeline aquifers due to excessive blasting to create 60 foot craters for turbine pads. Many of these aquifers supply sensitive ecosystems. The Moosehead Lake Region is home to exceptional trout ponds and streams and highly diverse wildlife populations including Canadian Lynx, Bald Eagles and the endangered Bicknell’s Thrush.
Disruption to these habitats could permanently alter the region’s wildlife populations.

6) The danger turbines present regarding the many gallons of flammable liquids contained in each turbine and the very real possibility of a fire being ignited in these remote areas. These areas do not have the resources or the manpower to fight a large fire should one occur in one of these remote locations.

7) The devastating economic impact on local tourism economies throughout the region and surrounding communities. The Moosehead Lake Region is the largest contributor of tourism revenue for Somerset County and a large contributor to Maine’s economy. Tourism is one of the largest employers and revenue generators in Somerset County.

8) Widespread concern from residents of Somerset County and specifically the Moosehead Lake Region, both full-time and seasonal, for their way of life, their businesses, and their property values.

9) The results of a recent (May 2017) tourism study underwritten by the John Muir Trust sighting travelers are unwilling to visit areas heavily impacted by wind farms and utility transmission lines. The study states that 55% of respondents would not visit an area subjected to large scale wind farms and their associated utility transmission.

Therefore, the Somerset County Commissioners hereby request that no further industrial wind facilities be permitted or approved in Somerset County and the Moosehead Lake Region.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully,

Dawn M. DiBlasi, Esq.
Somerset County Administrator

Somerset County Commissioners

Newell Graf, Chairman

Lloyd Trafton, Vice-Chairman

Cyprian Johnson, Commissioner

Robert Sezak, Commissioner

Dean Cray, Commissioner

COMMISSIONERS

Robert Sezak
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