

Testimony

My name is Shirley Nelson, and I live in Lowell, Vermont.

My husband Don grew up on our farm which is nestled against the Lowell Mountains. I grew up in Craftsbury with the Lowell Mountains in our view shed.

Don worked for the State of Vermont in the Highway Department in several divisions which included Right of Way and Survey as a party chief.

In 1968 Don's father was ready to retire so we made a change and bought the family farm. We have four children that grew up and learned to work hard, be good stewards of the land and value the land. Over time we bought the rest of the acreage from his father along with another abutting parcel, cleared 75 acres, built 3 fish ponds, made trails through the woods and picked a lot of stones. We made improvements to the barn and house and had the buildings added to the State Historical Records.

We decided early on that we wouldn't post our land but would share it with hunters, hikers, bikers, horseback riders, campers, skiers, the snowmobile club and others. We hosted an outside wedding and had receptions and reunions there and several of our grandchildren were baptized there. Our children brought friends home from college to learn about farm life and the beauty of the mountains - both the seen and the hidden beauty that is not so obvious – the Mystique of the Mountains.

Everything we earned went back into our property to make it better. Our goal was to retire and enjoy the place we had put so much work into – or if a person with the right values of stewardship and desire to enjoy the quiet, private setting that we had came along, we could sell and move on to some other quiet, peaceful location.

I'D LIKE TO TELL YOU WHY WE DO NEED A MORITORIUM!

- Our home is about 4500 ft. from the turbines of the LOWELL project on the east side of the mountains and our property borders the project for 1½ miles. The cabin we built with our grandchildren for the whole family to use is about 1,900 feet from the turbines. We have two

ponds in the same field that we, our family and others have always enjoyed for swimming, camping and fishing.

- Our property had the third highest taxes in Lowell for many years. We paid our taxes every year knowing that it was for the home and property that we had worked on to make it a place that we, our family and friends, cross country skiers, Sterling College classes, campers, hikers, leaf peepers, horseback riders, hunters and the snowmobilers could enjoy, relax and get away from the stress of everyday life. Now our property of (600 +/-) acres, is worth much less and our home is no longer desirable. Many of our neighbors have been dealt the same situation. It feels like everything we have all worked for is thrown away.
- Many things we have been saying about the effects these projects might have on us, our friends and neighbors have in fact happened and are still happening.
- This project has driven away the hunters, the Sterling College winter survival course and campers. One of our daughters and her family had to leave on Thanksgiving Day because of the effects of the noise. Of our guests that day– some felt no effects, two developed migraines (one felt nauseous), some were feeling pressure in their ears and some with ears ringing. We had to close an open window to lower the sound level.
- The governor refused to come to meet with us and our neighbors on the east side of the mountains saying he had already been to Lowell. He went to the town office, far removed from the project, and met with the Select Board chair instead.
- This has all been served to us on a tarnished platter along with threats, bullying, etc. which includes – to name a few :
 - *A faulty survey was done to change the range line to obtain property that was wanted for a wind project.
 - *GMP took us to court and gave us a Temporary Restraining Order, to keep us and anyone else off 180 acres of our land. We

firmly believe in property rights but where have ours gone?

*A proposed farm sale to a young couple saying that they wanted to buy the farm was set up through the VLT but financed by GMP and the landowner leasing the wind project site to GMP. Only an eleventh hour admission of these facts by VLT opened up what was really going on, although we had felt toward the end that we were being set up. It was revealed the CEO of GMP was also the chair of the directors of VLT.

*While trying to get some help for a noise situation that was unacceptable on a November weekend – both to us and to MANY neighbors – I called Geoff Commons and was told, 'this is my Saturdayyou can call the DPS office and leave a message'. Prior to this project we and the people of this area also had Saturdays, weekends and holidays to enjoy, too!

*The wildlife has been driven away from the area and what wildlife is left is only out at night - we have had two game cameras out for many years and had many pictures of the wildlife each day. This year, day after day, there were no pictures. Others in the area have reported the same results.

*The newest issue is the effects of the noise on families living close to the project and the surrounding areas and towns, where the noise travels in the mountainous terrain. The good neighbor payments to Lowell and to surrounding towns cannot replace what is being taken from the families that had been able to live in and enjoy their homes and now find they are unable to sleep at night with windows closed. What will happen in the spring, summer and fall?

*The Public Service Board set sound levels at 45 decibels for noise outside of a house and 35 decibels inside the house. In my Noise Diary among the things that I have mentioned are the readings that I have taken on some occasions. They have been as high as 49 db outside the house and 44 db in our guest bedroom. These are above the allowed sound levels but I have found that even at the levels that

they do allow it is just much too loud. In a rural setting residents and guests expect things to be quiet. I often experience headaches, ringing in my ears and tightness like a band around my head. When the noise goes on and on I find myself becoming irritable like you would with a faucet dripping. These are things that I didn't experience before. There should also be testing required for low frequency sound .

*Homeowners living around these existing projects have been tossed Head first into the role of the guinea pigs as the health impacts of The noise from ridgeline development is being experienced for the first time in Vermont.

- The present wind facilities have only proven that the noise levels are way too high and the presence of infrasound really needs to be addressed. The state has a glut of power at this point and the grid cannot handle the ups and downs created by large scale wind power facilities.
- I've been keeping a log to show what we have been living with in terms of noise and the effects it has on us. This doesn't even speak for our neighbors who have been bothered as much or more than we have.
- **Please pass the three year moratorium to stop any more ridgeline development until the true effects of this policy has been studied, understood, and disclosed, and our communities healed. We were asked to only report complaints to GMP through their public relations person. I don't feel comfortable doing this because of their lawsuit and the way they have treated everyone involved. Many people haven't complained publicly because they have lost all confidence in GMP and other developers, the Governor, the PSB, the PSD, the ANR and the legislature. A moratorium would be a start to bring back the feeling of community that has been shattered by these developers throughout the state. I'm beginning to understand the concept of water boarding.**

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