

Rutland County Considers Major Wind Farm

Tinmouth, Vermont - May 14, 2009

Rutland County residents are meeting with the planners of a proposed wind power project for nearby ridgelines. Thursday night about 45 residents of Tinmouth met with Vermont Community Wind Farm, (VCWF) - the company that hopes to build up to 60 wind turbines on three separate ridges canvassing six towns. VCWF is holding meetings with each of the affected towns.

The discussion in Tinmouth was centered on scaling back the size of the 80 megawatt wind energy generation project. The current proposal would make it the second largest electric generation system in Vermont, behind Vermont Yankee.

"Extremely early in the process, and that's part of the reason I think for people being frustrated and not having answers to all of the questions because the studies in fact are just beginning," said Jeffrey Wennberg of VCWF.

While some residents are adamantly against the project, a majority say they would support the project if it was smaller in scale. Some are also uneasy about the idea of major corporations backing the project and owning the turbines. They would rather the communities be offered a chance to buy the turbines.

"I think if you looked up on a mountain and saw a wind turbine turning and thought gee that's our town's windmill you'd feel a little different about it," said Tinmouth resident Marshall Squire.

VCWF says it's willing to consider that idea and any others residents have so they can factor them into various studies that lead up to the permitting process.

Power from the turbines would be sold to local utilities like Green Mountain Power or Central Vermont Public Service. The projects planners say they don't expect electricity rates to be greatly impacted.

Bianca Slota - WCAX News