

Dear Linda

Our story is very much like Wendy Todd's. We had moved away and our retirement dream was to move home, move home to old friends, peace, quiet, and country living. The first year after building our house was heaven. The quiet was so complete that we thought we had gone deaf. The wildlife on our lawn was so much fun.

We had heard about the windmills but when we asked how they would affect us if we bought the land, the town manager told us we wouldn't even see them, much less hear them because they were going on the front of the mountains. We believed them. That was our biggest mistake. At that time we had no idea that the town fathers had not even read the application that they had co-signed on or hired a lawyer to explain it to them. They had no idea what they had agreed to. They, in turn, had believed everything UPC had told them. The biggest lie of all was that there would be no noise or you had to be within 500' to hear anything. I believe that is still in their propaganda.

We had one winter of quiet solitude then with the spring came giants traveling our roads, being stockpiled everywhere. Giant bull dozers and cranes took over our mountain. Roads three lanes wide were being cut through the trees.

Blasting began. We never knew when they were going to blast. The windows shook and ledge would land on our lawn because they wouldn't use mats. The heavy equipment would start up before daylight and go. What a shock it was to all of us when they blasted away the whole end of the mountain. The giant scar got bigger and bigger. Then were more huge scars across our beautiful mountain. The whole terrain was being devastated. When we saw the huge circles of raped land across the top of a mountain where generations of people had skied, hiked, picnicked, held sunrise services on Easter morning, hunted and four-wheeled, we knew we had been badly lied to and life around Mars Hill Mountain as we had known it was gone. The beauty and the access to the ridges would never be again.

A close friend of ours wanted to buy ten acres of land from us for a house lot. After he saw what was happening he decided he definitely did not want to live with the windmills in his front yard. Sadly, we agreed with him. Unfortunately, our dream of maybe extra retirement money was gone.

The massive white giants started turning and were on line in March of 2006. Our lives greatly changed that day. We had been upset over the blasting and the devastation of the mountain and the eyesore, but nothing compared to the noise. As they added more windmills on line, the louder they got. If we got up in the middle of the night, we couldn't get back to sleep. We closed the windows, the doors, had the furnace running and the drumming never stopped. On a foggy or snowy day it was always worse. Our t.v. flickers with each turn of the blades. We both spent those winter nights roaming around the house because we couldn't sleep. Then, the less we slept, the angrier we would become because of the situation. When I went out the front door, a sense of rage would hit me that I have never known before. Even after thirty years of teaching, raising two boys and going through a divorce has never produced the kind of rage I feel those windmills are pounding.

When our autistic, seizure-prone granddaughter comes to visit, we spend no time outdoors due to the shadowing effects and the strobing effects. The shadowing and strobing red lights are known to induce seizures.

My husband and I have both had depression from sleep deprivation and worry about our investments of land, etc. Insomnia has become a way of life for me. We are still on medications for these problems.

We are, by nature, outdoor people. Most of our days were spent outdoors with gardening, the dog, or just drinking tea on the porch. Now we do what we have to and then head inside and turn up the t.v. We have had no choices. We have had this lifestyle forced on to us.

When they start talking about tax breaks for the towns people, ours amounted to \$151.00. For \$151.00, we have lost our lifestyle forever. The windmill people are paying three to four mils to the town for taxes. We are paying twenty mils. So, yes, our lifestyle is greatly changed. Dreams of solitude and financial plans have been changed. We now have a choice -- put up with it, hate it but get used to it, or sell at a greatly reduced price or not at all. Suck up the loss and move.

If we had had our privacy invaded, been harassed or had trespassers on our land, it would be illegal. Because it is just noise, all we can do is live with it. If you live within two to three miles, I pity you because of the noise. If you live within fifty miles, I pity you because of the eyesore.

One more thing -- if you use your ridge for recreational uses, that will be gone. We are not allowed on that mountain at all. All access trails are gated or chained with no trespassing signs everywhere, even along the top of the mountain, just in case someone does get up there. They will tell you it is up to the landowners that they rent from, but that is another lie. Even with signed permission slips from the owners, try to find a way up.

You will have a hard time to fight these because our government receives money. Our State is 100% for wind power for bragging rights that Maine is a forerunner in "Green" and the DEP works for the State and their boss is the Governor. The DEP added a five decibel noise level so UPC would be in compliance to the application. Politics is a hard thing to fight.

But, one things if for sure! Once they are up and running, no matter what you do, they are not coming down until they fall down and certainly never in my life time.

We are not against wind power but strongly feel they have to be placed where the impact is less. They should never be within five miles of a dwelling. Also, money should be put in escrow to remove them when their earning power is gone or they are too expensive to repair. I worry about Maine becoming a windmill bone yard because no small town will ever afford to remove them.

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Mars Hill