

To the Editor:

Gary Skulnik and Mike Tidwell are tin men shilling for the wind industry. Their respective “organizations” — Clean Energy Partnership and Chesapeake Climate Action Network — function in the same stalking horse way as the Heritage Foundation does to promote corporate causes. They make repetitive unsupportable claims using seductive Orwellian rhetoric, trusting that a diffident press and an often indifferent public will not challenge them. Their pretentious “environmentalism” fosters the illusion the wind industry will solve many of our environmental problems, in effect masking the real nature of the commodity: tax sheltering schemes for a few investors at the expense of average taxpayers and rate payers. The fact is, for all their ballyhoo, wind energy here in the East will not put a dent in the problems of air pollution and global warming.

Over the last week, Tidwell and Skulnik, colluding with wind developers, have resorted to a disinformation diversion worthy of Karl Rove in order to “take out” one of the most effective opponents of irresponsible windplant operations, Dan Boone, who presently chairs the Conservation Committee of the Sierra Club’s Maryland chapter and who remains “one of Maryland’s finest naturalists,” according to *The Baltimore Sun*. Tidwell/Skulnik charge that Boone (my brother) is at fault for not releasing studies that might demonstrate how safe wind technology is for migratory wildlife. Since Boone was responsible for getting those studies done in the first place, the charge is more than ironic. But it is also inaccurate — and misleading. The companies involved, Clipper Windpower and US WindForce, both insisted on the non-disclosure conditions imposed on those studies and now a number of people aside from Boone must agree to their release.

Since I am one of those people, here are my conditions. Both wind corporations must admit in writing that it, not Dan Boone or any others, insisted on “secret” studies; the studies must be released in their entirety, including all data, without restriction; and these reports must not be used to excuse the need for additional research to map the complex mosaic involved in wildlife migration over the Allegheny ridgetops. I’m confident that this investigation will demonstrate, as similar recent research already has, that massive wind plants constructed atop mountains in areas well known for wildlife migration pose an unacceptable risk to birds and bats. At the same time, this important issue should not distract from other threats posed by this industry — devaluation of property, destruction of heritage views, and noise/light disturbances to nearby residents.

Jon Boone
Friends of Backbone Mountain
Mountain Lake Park, MD

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