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## **FIRST WIND OF BOSTON DENIED PERMIT FOR BOWERS MOUNTAIN WIND PROJECT IN MAINE**

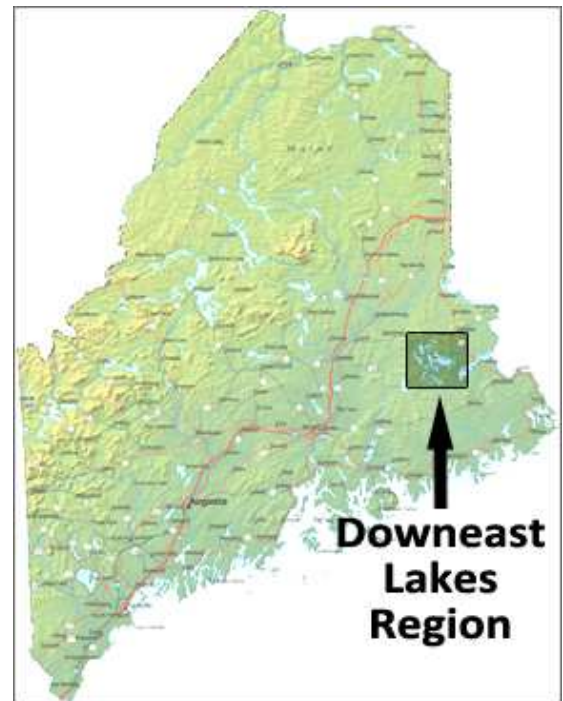
Project's Unreasonable Scenic Impact on Pristine Downeast Lakes Region Cited

April 20, 2012  
Bangor, ME

With today's 5-0 vote, Maine's Land Use Regulation Commission (LURC) handed First Wind Holdings LLC of Boston its first ever denial of a wind energy development permit. The \$135 million Bower Mountain Wind Project would have placed 27 forty-three story tall turbines on prominent ridgelines in Carroll and Kossuth in the Scenic Downeast Lakes Region.

"LURC's decision to deny the Bowers project is true to its founding principles and Comprehensive Land Use Plan" said Kevin Gurall, President of the grass-roots opposition group Partnership for the Preservation of the Downeast Lakes Watershed (PPDLW).

The area that would have been most impacted by the Bowers project, the Scenic Downeast Lakes Region, includes a network of some two dozen lakes. For more than a century, sportsmen and families from all over the country and abroad have come to the region to enjoy a wilderness experience devoid of industrial development. It is home to more than a dozen classic Maine sporting camps and boasts the largest concentration of Professional Maine Guides in the State.



In June 2011 LURC held a two-day public hearing on First Wind's permit application. In a remarkable turnout for a small community, 374 citizens testified, over 90% of them speaking against the project. Opposition also came from The Maine Professional Guides' Association, The Grand Lake Stream Guides' Association and The Maine Sporting Camp Owners' Association. Gurall explains, "The Scenic Downeast Lakes Region is almost entirely dependent on sporting- and nature-based tourism for its survival. Anything that takes away from the wilderness experience will affect tourism which will in turn cost many residents their jobs and their businesses. Clearly this is not the place to build an industrial wind project."

The siting of the project was controversial from the beginning. Within eight miles of the project site there are nine lakes that the State of Maine has designated Scenic Resources of State Significance. Two of those earned Maine's highest rating "Outstanding for Scenic Quality". Four of the lakes are within three miles of the project site. In its landmark decision LURC acknowledged that the decision turned on the project's failure to meet the Wind Law's scenic impact criterion.

First Wind's Director of Communications, John Lamontagne, has said that First Wind will modify the application and resubmit it later this year. PPDLW spokesman, Gary Campbell responds "We are prepared and committed to defending the region again should they submit a revised plan. The folks who live and make their living in this watershed are convinced that it would be impossible to build an industrial wind facility here that would not seriously hurt the local economy. Even the LURC Commissioners went on the record to express doubt that First Wind can modify the plan enough to bring the project into compliance with the statutory scenic impact limits."

Gurall continued, "We'd like to thank the LURC Commissioners as well as the members of PPDLW and the hundreds of Maine citizens who stood in agreement with us. Every day, more Mainers are waking up to the false promises of the wind industry, the extremely flawed Maine Expedited Wind Law, and the financial liability of these heavily subsidized projects. Just because this state's previous administration gave away the henhouse, doesn't mean that we should not or cannot go back and review, analyze, and make adjustments to the wind law. Nature-based tourism is so vital to the state's economy that we cannot afford to risk it in order to feed an insignificant amount of high priced wind energy into the ISO New England grid."

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