

Statement of the Maine Professional Guides Association on Bowers Mountain wind project 6/01/11

The Maine Professional Guides Association represents 800 working Registered Maine Guides; first formed in 1979 the Association is composed of Guides who strive to enhance the standards of the guiding industry. These are professional guides dedicated to promoting a quality, ethical and legal outdoor experience for all. Please remember that not all Registered Maine Guides are members of Maine Professional Guides Association.

The Grand Lakes region is especially significant to our members as the location of a number of historically significant lodges and one of the largest concentrations of working guides in the state. The large number of significant waters and fisheries makes this region one of statewide if not national significance. This significance is enhanced by the efforts to conserve as working forest a large part of the land in the region, an effort to ensure that the remote character of the region is preserved.

The impact of the wind power project on Bowers Mountain will significantly impact the success of guides in this region by simply being visible at almost every turn. The project will be clearly visible from many of the lunch spots and boat launches regularly used by guides. The resulting loss of the feeling of remoteness will significantly reduce the marketability of guided trips in the region and impact our members significantly and directly.

*The Maine Professional Guides Association* urges the State of Maine to recognize and address the adverse economic impact that industrial scale wind farms can cause to Maine's guides. The unspoiled lands, waters and natural character of inland Maine's landscape are what attract clientele to our Association's doorsteps. Without these elements, the livelihood of the Maine Guide and the quality of outdoor recreation in Maine will be irreplaceably lost. Unfortunately, industrial scale wind power projects have far reaching impacts well beyond the actual project site. Their visual and audible impacts, both day and night, can extend far and are in direct conflict with the very characteristics that bring our clients to Maine. Our current knowledge of the impacts that these wind farms may have on wildlife large and small is insufficient to provide comfort to those of us who depend on that resource for our economic survival.

*The Maine Professional Guides Association* is not philosophically opposed to all wind energy. The rates that our businesses pay for electricity are a heavy burden. However the current government supported model is not economically viable. Improperly placed industrial scale wind farms threaten the traditional sporting economy, employment incomes, and small businesses that make up our Association. We request that the State revisit its current goals for wind power projects and put into place measures that both recognize and protect the guiding profession in Maine.

*Presented by Dale Tobey VP MPGA*