

STATE OF MAINE

LAND USE REGULATION COMMISSION

In the Matter of)
Development Permit DP 4889)
Champlain Wind LLC)
Bowers Mountain Project)
Carroll Plantation, Penobscot County)
Kossuth Township, Washington County)

PREFILED TESTIMONY OF CHARLES DRIZA

ON BEHALF OF INTERVENOR, PARTNERSHIP FOR

THE PRESERVATION OF THE DOWNEAST LAKES WATERSHED

Testimony of Charles Driza

My name is Charles Driza and my sister, Cecilia Driza, and I are the owners of Leen's Lodge in Grand Lake Stream Maine. We purchased Leen's Lodge in May of 2001. Leen's is a traditional sporting camp that has been in existence since 1940. I am a Mechanical Engineer by trade, and after many years in the corporate world, I decided to follow my dream of owning a sporting camp in the wilderness of Maine.

After many years of researching camps all over the state, I chose to purchase in Downeast Maine for the pristine wilderness that defined the area. The area boasts many lakes and streams as well as a large tract of wilderness that could be enjoyed by all of our guests. We offer fishing and bird hunting as the primary activities to be enjoyed at the lodge.

When we purchased the lodge in 2001, the land was leased from the Webber family. Two years ago, the land came up for sale and we took advantage of the situation and purchased the 23 acres that the lodge is located on. This purchase was a large investment for our family and puts a tremendous burden on the lodge cash flow, but we were happy to own the land that we love so much. Soon after purchasing the land, we became aware of the potential for industrial wind turbines to be placed on Bowers, therefore impacting the views that grace the lodge each day. The potential impact of the turbines is huge to the guests of Leen's Lodge, both from the Dining Room views and while fishing or hunting in the surrounding area. We fish all the lakes that connect to West Grand Lake including Junior Bay, Junior Lake, Pocumcus Lake, Junior Stream and Scraggly Lake. All of these areas will be impacted by the eyesore of industrial turbines. Our bird hunters also hunt in the area of Bowers Mountain and are impacted both visually and by the fact that the land will no longer be accessible to our hunters, who do not wish to hunt close to turbines. The turbine project will have a detrimental impact on our land value as well as affect the business and hamper our ability to meet our financial requirements. If I was aware of the turbine project when I purchased the land, I would not have purchased the land, but rather stayed on my lease until it expired.

One of the aspects of our area that makes it challenging from a business point of view is the distance that our guests have to travel. The closest metropolitan area that we draw from is Boston, a 7 hour drive. Our guests come from all over the country and from abroad, but primarily from the east coast. Famous guests that have visited our lodge are Ted Williams, Kurt Goudy, Bud Levitt, John Halvick, and many of the Red Sox and Boston Celtics. They drive 10-20 hours to get to the lodge and usually take one or more days to get here. They do that to enjoy the wilderness environment once they arrive. The pristine characteristics of our area allow our guests to "get away from it all" and recharge their batteries. Many of our guests have shown great disappointment at the prospect of seeing industrial wind generators dotting the landscape of their wilderness haven. One of our recent guests, Karen and Richard Dascoll, commented, "If we wanted to see industrial growth, we could have stayed in New Jersey." The unspoiled landscape and natural character of the land surrounding Grand Lake Stream are what make this area a destination for our guests. The industrial wind turbines will forever destroy the wilderness nature of our area.

Grand Lake Stream is home to the largest concentration of registered Maine Guides in the state. All of the local guides work at Leen's Lodge. One event the Leen's Lodge hosts each year is an economic summit where 50 economists from all over the world meet here to network and share ideas on world economics. Of course, they also go out with local guides to enjoy our lakes and the wonderful fishing. The event is often televised by Bloomberg TV or CNBC Financial. This group alone requires us to hire 30 guides and other locals to cook and attend to the needs of the large contingency. Many of the economists have commented on the potential of the wind turbines and noted what a negative affect they will have on our environment. The pristine nature of the area will forever be altered in a negative manner by the industrial wind turbine installation on Bowers Mountain. Our economy is highly dependent on the natural resources in our area. Our guides utilize the area for fishing, hunting, canoeing, rafting and wildlife viewing. All of these activities will be affected by the turbines. Our guests are here to see the eagles, moose, bears, loons and other wildlife while enjoying the lakes and streams in our watershed. A lose of revenue at the lodge will result in a lose to all the guides and employees that presently work for Leen's. Washington County is presently one of the poorest counties in Maine, and to further loose revenue due to the negative impact of the turbines will have a disastrous affect on the people who are already struggling to make a living in our county.

Soon after purchasing the lodge in 2001, I became aware of the Downeast Lakes Land Trust, a local non-profit organization founded in Grand Lake Stream. The mission of the organization is to contribute to the long term economic and environmental well being of the Downeast Lakes region through the conservation and exemplary management of its forest and waters. I contributed to the trust because I knew that it represented the values that are similar to my own. The Trust started with a vision to protect the extraordinary natural resources of our area and the way of life that we know and love. The fisheries that are protected include native landlocked salmon and brook trout, smallmouth bass and lake trout, and these fisheries are world renowned. **DLLT has purchased and manages the 33,708-acre Farm Cove Community Forest, with 71 miles of lakeshore, for wildlife habitat, forest products, and public recreation. DLLT provides guides and sporting camps an environment that supports their continued success, contributing to the preservation of the heritage and culture of Grand Lake Stream. Many supporters and partners have helped us succeed in protecting 350,000 acres of the forests, wildlife habitats, watersheds, and lakeshores that can sustain the region's future.** The trust continues in their efforts to conserve our areas forests so that they will forever remain wild, and support the efforts of the Grand Lake Guides to continue to make a living in the local forest. The DLLT has been recognized for its significant contributions to preserving our local forests. In 2010, the West Grand Lake Community Forest Project was selected as the top national priority for the Forest Legacy Program by the U.S. Forest Service due to its economic, ecological and recreational values. In 2008, they received top national priority for the Wabassus Lake Project by the U.S. Forest Service due to its economic, ecological and recreational values. The list goes on. The continuation of the Bowers industrial wind turbine project will forever hurt the efforts of

the Downeast Lakes Land Trust and the local people to protect our resources and economy.

Our Dining Room faces the west on West Grand Lake. It has a direct view of Bowers Mountain. There are two frequently asked questions by the guests of Leen's Lodge. The first is, "What is the weather for tomorrow?", and the second most asked question is "What is that red light I see on the distant hill in front of the Dining Room?" That light is a radio tower beacon from the top of Musquash Mountain. The event of the wind turbines on Bowers Mountain will result many red beacons on Bowers Mountain for the guests at Leen's Lodge to view from the Dining Room. The Northern Lights might be welcomed by our guests, but the lights that mark the tops of the industrial wind turbines will forever be a reminder to the guests at Leen's that true wilderness does not exist anymore in Downeast Maine.

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Charles Driza

JOANNE TOBEY
Notary Public, Maine
My Commission Expires September 18, 2017



