



Lehigh Valley Audubon Society

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society
P. O. Box 290 Emmaus, Pennsylvania 18049

August 2, 2018

This letter is in support of the opposition to the proposed wind farm on Bethlehem Water Authority land on the top of Stony Ridge, Pohopoco Mountain, and Call Mountain south of Albrightsville. This land is critical bird habitat. According to eBird, the online bird reporting website, 176 species have been observed in the area. Large tracts of contiguous forest are becoming much less common and it is extremely important for breeding birds that need extensive forest such as scarlet tanagers, wood thrush, hermit thrush and numerous other species. Once this forest is fragmented this important habitat is destroyed forever. Wood thrush populations have decreased by 50% since 1966. We can ill afford to lose more of this important habitat. In addition to degrading the habitat it is well known the deleterious effect windmills have on birds and bats. According to the American Bird Conservancy, thousands of birds and bats are killed each year. The exact number is unknown because the wind industry considers the bird and bat mortality as a trade secret. The proposed site of the wind farm is also close to Long Pond. The Long Pond area is home to the highest concentration of globally rare and endangered species in Pennsylvania. Long Pond also contains 5500 acres of a barrens-heath ecosystem that appears nowhere else on earth. So, the area is not only unique to Pennsylvania, but to the planet.

Lehigh Valley Audubon fully supports renewable energy where appropriate. Renewable energy is critical to help combat climate change and an important part of our energy portfolio. But wind turbines should be placed in areas that minimize the impact on wildlife and the environment. The proposed wind farm in Penn Forest Township will have a negative effect on wildlife and the environment. Lehigh Valley Audubon applauds efforts to use renewables. But the Bethlehem Authority property in Penn Forest Township is the not right place for a project of this kind. Please continue the good stewardship of Bethlehem Water Authority land by not building the wind farm.

Sincerely,

Jon Levin

Conservation Chair

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