

## **Jordanville group backs renewable energy**

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Published: Monday, November 6, 2006 11:03 AM CST

JORDANVILLE - A group of Jordanville-area residents have banded together to form the Friends of Renewable Energy, a group dedicated to promoting the use of renewable energy in New York state.

Group spokesperson Shirley Mower said that creation of a Web site is under way, adding that the group will hold regular meetings starting in December. The group seeks to educate the public on the benefits of renewable energy, including wind power.

"The Web site will have a lot of good facts on it, not a lot of hype you see and read about every day," said Mower.

Mower said the group stands firmly behind the three wind energy projects that have been proposed in Herkimer County, including a 68-turbine project in the towns of Stark and Warren.

According to developer Community Energy, the 136-megawatt Jordanville Wind Farm is expected to generate around \$800,000 in annual revenues for local governments and school districts, and have the capacity to provide the annual electric needs of more than 51,000 homes.

Farmers in the area stand to benefit financially from the project, but Mower explained that they're also doing a good turn for the area, since agreeing to have the windmills placed on their land will allow the project to move forward and provide a boost to the local economy.

"We are giving up a very small portion of our land and it gives so much back to these two communities in the way of taxes for our school, county and townships," said Mower. "We are not wealthy by any means, but this is our own way of giving back by allowing a small portion of our land to be used for these wind turbines."

She noted that about three-fourths of the land in the Jordanville Wind Farm area is run by active farmers or is rented by active farmers.

"This is an extra little niche market we can tie into," said Mower.

With many farmers in the area struggling to make ends meet, Mower said the towers should prove to be a Godsend.

"A lot of them are active farmers looking at it as some extra retirement money or not having to struggle so hard to pay their taxes. They may also be retired farmers who do not have the income a regular running farm does," said Mower.

Many are vehemently opposed to the wind projects, however, citing everything from potential negative health effects from the wind turbines to effects on property values. Opponents in the Jordanville area claim the area's karst topography, including the presence of sinkholes, poses a

threat to the area's ground water supply. However, Mower, whose farm is located in the heart of the project area, thinks these opponents represent a small minority of folks.

“You cannot believe the people we come across that are so in favor of clean and green energy,” said Mower. “I just do not understand where some people are coming from with their objections. It just doesn't make sense. The company has done its best to comply with all the questions they've been asked.”

Community Energy released the project's Draft Environmental Impact Statement in May, and experts are currently finishing up some additional environmental, geophysical and operational studies for a supplement to the DEIS. The Final Environmental Impact Statement is expected to be released in early November and will be available for further public comment.

Mower added that although the group stands behind all forms of renewable energy, wind energy remains the most viable option.

“While we are all for the wood chip factory, and all renewable energy, it takes a long time for trees to grow back and the wind is always blowing up here,” adds Mower.